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MORE ABOUT UNKNOWN LONDON

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON IN 1666

UNKNOWN LONDON

THE TOWER OF LONDON

THE BODLEY HEAD

GIANT MAGOG AT GUILDHALL
By permission of Guildhall Library Committee

MORE ABOUT UNKNOWN LONDON

BY WALTER GEORGE BELL
F.R.A.S.

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

WHY don't you write a book upon London?" I have been asked. I am wholly incorrigible. Not for me are the encyclopædists. I wrote a book upon a single street in London once—to be exact, upon the 536 yards of Fleet Street that you may measure between Ludgate Circus and Temple Bar—and a truthful reviewer accused me of writing a quarter of a million words. (I mean nothing by the phrase, accepting all reviewers as truthful, else how could they be so kind?) I plead guilty to the quarter of a million words, but I am not writing London complete on the same scale.

With serious books, of inordinate length, to my name, if any reputation I may have surviving them it must be—well, of that kind of person. My great-nieces tell me that only short-sighted people read serious books. Of one such, of which I proudly claim authorship, my artist brother assured me that it was excellent, saying that he read it at nights in bed, before going to sleep. I am not sure that this is wholly praise, but it

encourages hope that after normal sales have ceased I may yet look forward to profits from sundry volumes prescribed each year by the Faculty.

This book has been put together at odd times, as recreation in intervals of more substantial work. It is without plan, disjointed, disconnected as London itself is, without any particular period of time or mood. I offer these contents as recreation. Some papers, I assure you, are exceedingly grave. The hope is entombed that somewhere between the two covers may be found a stimulus for every reader who ventures to learn more of the history of London—the greatest, most varied, most alluring city in the world.

Two of these papers have appeared before: "Anne Boleyn's Letter" in *The Daily Telegraph*, from which it is reprinted by permission; and "Dr Johnson's Womankind" is an after-dinner speech at the Pioneer Club. My skilful friend Hanslip Fletcher allows me to use three of his drawings, that of the old printing-house room with the goodwill of the *Manchester Guardian*, wherein it first appeared; another friend, Lionel Gowing, has brought out his camera to make other pictures; Guildhall Library Committee gives me its Giants; and to the kindness of one and all I express my debt of obligation.

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MORE ABOUT UNKNOWN LONDON

I

GOGMAGOG AND OTHER GIANTS

WHO is there that has not stored in an odd corner of the brain some vivid impression of wonderment gained in the most impressionable years of childhood, which keeps fresh and distinct amid all the crowded memories of later years? The event is not necessarily of importance—often quite the reverse. The boy who is six or seven to-day ought so to recall his first sight of a flying-machine picked out of the skies as it has come humming overhead, but I question if that will influence his imagination. In my own case it was Giants.

That day, being of about six years of age, I had no expectation of keeping the company of Giants. Chance had brought me to the office of an uncle who was "something in the City," a Goth I fear from my later recollections of him, his dull brain, befogged with prices, unresponsive to historical things. With him I had passed into Guildhall's mediæval porch, and through to the great hall. Looking left, the Giants there

by the window arrested my whole attention, all motion ceased involuntarily, and at a stand-still, awe-stricken, I stared.

Gog and Magog, jolly old fellows they were, and are, with bucolic freshness of face, their clothes painted upon them in the gayest of colours. That fearsome weapon, the spiked "morning star" that Gog carries—what a blow that would give! thought I. Every day, I learnt, when the Giants hear the clock strike twelve they come down to dinner. How anxious I was to be in Guildhall at that hour of noon, to see them clamber off their pedestals and stalk hungry away.

In what gigantic cooking-pot was that Gargantuan meal prepared? Where was it served? But I never saw this Giants' feast. My relative's business was too pressing for us to stay. It was always so with these elder people. But I lingered long enough to acquire additional lore.

The Giants, I learnt, did not always stand so quietly by the window, but in ancient days took station on either side of the door of the Council Chamber when the Common Councilmen filed in to do the City's business, guarding them against intruders. What thwacks old Gog must have given when he espied strangers! How Magog would have pinned them one after another on his long spear! I laughed with delight.

Gog, I felt sure, was the most wicked of the two Giants, else why should he look so sad?—for to the unspoilt imagination of early youth all Giants are wicked; it is only in after-years, with the knowledge that there are germs both good and bad, comes the realization that, at the other end of the scale, there may be beneficent as well as evil monsters. These twin colossi were to my diminutive self of at least twice the stature that they wear when now I see them, and they are big fellows still.

I had no good fortune in those tender years. Another day I was shown the stone Lion aloft on the old Northumberland House by Charing Cross, crowning the high wall—the clearance of the ducal town mansion and of Charing Cross did not take place till about 1873. His outstretched poker tail I admired. Still more was I impressed by the assurance that at the hour of midnight, when the moon shone, the Lion got off his pedestal and walked round. I only saw him stiff and lifeless, never walking round, for no one took my inquisitive self to the riverside at the magic hour.

No doubt because of this curiosity stimulated in childhood, I have always found a lively interest in London's Giants, having delved deeply, and been amply repaid. I value lightly the careless statements of the ignorant.

These say that Giants are no more than things of wood, or than creations of some addled brain. Giants have history, known better to the old writers than to ourselves. They lived a few centuries nearer to the gigantic race. Caxton, himself a scholar, at his press within the Almonry at Westminster—the Central Hall stands about the site—printed his veracious *Chronicles of England*, telling not only the deeds of the Giants, but of the first peopling of these islands and the founding of London as New Troy.

You did not know that London was ever named Troy? Listen, and learn from Caxton how it came about, in this wise:

The Emperor Diocletian had three-and-thirty self-willed daughters, of whose management he was at last relieved by obtaining for them as many husbands. But the ladies did not pleasantly submit to the rule of their lords, and agreed among themselves to regain their lost liberties by each cutting her husband's throat. The deed was effected, and the Emperor their father, driven to despair of managing so refractory a family, to punish their crimes and rid himself of their presence sent them all to sea in one vessel, with half a year's provisions. After long sailing they reached an island, which they made their residence and named Albion, after the name of the eldest lady.

The Evil One, never losing sight of them, created visionary husbands for the ladies, who became the mothers of "horrible Giants," and these ruled in the land till the advent of Brutus. He it was to whom we owe the deliverance from gigantic rule of these fair lands—

"This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England."

But for Brute we Englishmen might be Giants to-day (with appalling morals) instead of men of normal stature, cheerfully paying our income-tax. I have his genealogical tree. He was son of Anthenon of Troy. That doughty warrior, when Troy was sacked by the Greeks, fled to Italy and founded the city of Pavia. Brutus, fired by the parental example, himself set out in search of new conquests, voyaged around the Spanish and French coasts, obtained the aid of the Gauls to invade Britain, and landed at the port where now stands Southampton.

His deeds I find best set out in detail in *The History of the Trojan Wars and Troy's Destruction*, so leave Caxton. Sarah Bates, at the sign of the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street, had this little book printed for her to sell in the year 1735. Was she herself the gifted authoress and historian, I wonder? Note here a divergisation. Albion,

heretofore a daughter of the Emperor Diocletian's interesting family, has become the devil-born son of that lady, and the defender of England. The time was remote, and that a little of the mists of antiquity should surround this Giant's origin, causing confusion, cannot surprise.

" Brute (so says our history), having thus got a footing in Britain, was preparing to improve the same when Albion, who had named this island after his own name, by which it is sometimes called to this day "—note this link in evidence with our own time—" having intelligence thereof, raised his whole power, being men of gigantic stature and vast strength, and bearing for their arms huge clubs of knotty oak, battle axes, whirl-bats of iron, and globes full of spikes fastened to a long pole by a chain; and with these encountering Brute, a bloody battle was fought, wherein the Trojans were worsted and many of them slain, and the whole army was forced to retire."

A black day for St George, but Brute retired only to fight again. Considering, says his biographer, the disadvantage between his men and Giants, he devised a stratagem to overthrow them. At night he dug a long and deep trench, at the bottom impaling it with sharp stakes, and covered it with boughs and rotten hurdles, on which he caused to be laid dried leaves and earth, only leaving some

firm passages, well known to his men by particular marks. Trench warfare, you observe, is no new development of the European War, but as old as England's gigantic race.

The fight was renewed. The Trojans, nimbly retiring behind their trench, made a stand, plying their enemy with a shower of darts and arrows till, goaded to fury, the Giants rushed forward and the vanguard immediately perished on the stakes.

"The Trojans continuing to shoot their arrows very thickly, the Giants were put to flight and pursued into Cornwall [a distance, I find by Ordnance map, from Southampton of 129 miles]. There, in another bloody fight, Albion was slain by Brute, fighting hand to hand; and his two brothers, Gog and Magog, Giants of huge stature, were taken prisoners and led in triumph to the place where now London stands. Upon those risings on the side of the Thames Brute founded a city, which he called Troynovant, or New Troy, and building a Palace where Guildhall stands, he caused the two Giants to be chained to the gate of it as porters. In memory of which it is held that their effigies, after their deaths, were set up as they now appear in Guildhall."

Observe that the Giant Gogmagog has been split into two, a cleavage for which I know no

historical basis. *The Gigantick History of the Two Famous Giants in Guildhall** has better authority for its ascription of the elder Giant as Gogmagog, and the younger as Corineus. These two fought. Corineus was a younger brother of Brutus, sharing his wanderings and fortunes. Like was he to have been slain by Gogmagog, who, in a wrestle caught him aloft and broke three of his ribs. Desperately enraged thereby, Corineus —a Giant of quick temper, I take it—" collected all his strength, heaved up Gogmagog by main force, and bearing him on his shoulders to the next high rock, threw him headlong, all shattered, into the sea, and left his name on the cliff."

That cliff has ever since been called Lan-Goemagog, that is to say, the Giant's Leap. "Thus perished Goemagog, commonly called Gogmagog, the last of the Giants."

His fate is verified by other writers. Geoffrey of Monmouth, a well-respected person, if given at times to telling more than he knew, wrote Britain's history in the twelfth century and dealt with Gogmagog. Back in the thirteenth century a record of Fulke Warine, an outlawed baron of King John's time, was written in Anglo-Norman,

* Gigantick only in name, this history is in two tiny volumes which Thomas Boreman sold in 1741 from his bookstall "near the Giants in Guildhall."

on age-browned parchments still preserved in the British Museum, and reprinted but the other day. It describes a visit paid by William the Conqueror to the Welsh Marches. The stern King inquired the cause of a burnt and ruined town, and was told by an old Briton: "None inhabited these parts except very foul people, great Giants, whose King was called Goemagog. These heard of the arrival of Brutus and went out to encounter him, and at last all the Giants were killed except Goemagog," whose fight to the death with Corineus is given much as already told.

Locrine, an old tragedy once attributed to Shakespeare, gives an account of the Giants' fall, among them—

> "Gogmagog, son to Samotheus,
> The curséd captain of that damned crew."

As your modern historian (a dull fellow, and suspicious) would say, he is well documented. That there were Giants in England is established by the Gogmagog Hills in Cambridgeshire, near at home. Look at your map for the name. I love the mystery of names. Was it not Lord Beaconsfield who confessed that if the stars really were set back in illimitable space so many millions of miles distant as was represented, he was puzzled to know how astronomers found out their names?

And I could an I would quote Scripture, from both Revelation xx. 8, and the prophet Ezekiel, for both Gog and Magog. The effigies seen in Guildhall to-day are admittedly but things of wood, carved in the year 1708. Captain Richard Saunders, of King Street, which leads up to Guildhall, a gallant soldier of the Trained Bands, made them for replacing other Giants that had themselves replaced still earlier Giants burnt in the Great Fire of London. These originals, fashioned of wicker work and rushes, yearly graced my Lord Mayor's Show, being carried in the pageant till by decay of time, helped by a number of City rats and mice which had eaten up their entrails, they were no longer able to support themselves upright without collapse.

London citizens will recall that in the Lord Mayor's Show of 1912 there walked a great Giant. Some have said that he was not really a captive of the diminutive St George, aglow in armour of shimmering steel and with tossing crest, who led him through the streets by a chain; indeed, no Giant at all, but a normal man whose eyes peered through the lace of the jerkin. I must examine into that. But I dissent altogether from the statement that Gogmagog was the last of the Giants.

London itself had others of later date, of whom

John Stow, the most gifted of London antiquaries, has borne remembrance. The Giant of St Mary Aldermanbury was a towering fellow, though he left at that City church of himself only a shank bone, which was strung up for public inspection in the cloister—"a shankbone of a man (as is said) very great," observes Stow, "for it is in length 28 inches and a half of assize, light and somewhat porie [porous] and spongy. This bone is said to be found among the bones of men removed from the charnel-house of Paul's, or rather from the cloister of Paul's church, of both which reports I doubt"—not doubting this Giant's authentic limb bone, but its ascribed origin, and for this reason. Reyne Wolfe, Stationer, who paid for the carriage of the bones from the charnel, was himself an antiquary, and, knowing the covetousness of that breed, Stow says of him, "Neither would the same have been easily gotten from him, if he had heard thereof, except he had reserved the like for himself, being the greatest preserver of antiquities in those parts," which I account sufficient reason.

"True it is," adds Stow, wonderingly, "that this bone (from whencesoever it came) being of a man; as the form showeth, must needs be monstrous, and more than after the proportion of five shank bones of any man now living amongst us."

Indeed, a great monster likely to have caused confusion had he gone in the flesh to St Mary's church.

Now Reyne Wolfe was, in fact, the inspirer and employer of that antiquary and historian of wide fame known as Holinshead, whose large and valuable collection of Chronicles was published after Wolfe's death. William Harrison, who wrote of Giants in his *Description of Britain*, incorporated in those same Chronicles, also speaks of this bone at St Mary Aldermanbury, which he measured as 32 inches. To show the living generation what manner of Giant this was, there stood in the church cloister, fixed to the east wall not far from the bone itself, an image made by some skilful artist in full proportion, "which showeth the person of a man full ten or twelve feet high," says Harrison.

I found from their accounts that the wardens of St Mary Aldermanbury when rebuilding their church after the Great Fire of London paid—

> For digging a pit to bury ye bones, 5s. 4d.
> For baskets to carry ye bones to ye pit, 10d.;

and possibly the gigantic limb bone, a marvel to so many, went in with the rest.

St Laurence Jewry also had its Giant—Old Jewry had been the City ghetto till the London

Jews migrated east to Houndsditch and beyond, leaving only their name for remembrance. His remains John Stow had known from childhood. "I myself more than seventy years since"—he was writing about 1597—"have seen in this church the shank bone of a man (as it is taken), and also a tooth of a very great bigness hanged up for show in chains of iron, upon a pillar of stone, the tooth (being about the bigness of a man's fist) is long since conveyed from thence: the thigh or shank bone of 25 inches in length by rule remaineth yet fastened to a post of timber, and is not so much to be noted for the length, as for the thickness, hardness and strength thereof." Lacking knowledge where or when this bone was first discovered, Stow was of open mind. "The tooth of some monstrous fish, as I take it," he wrote in a marginal note. The shank bone "might be of an Oliphant." Not having this relic to handle and examine, I hesitate to give an opinion. It may have been an Oliphant.

A yet more ample Giant, rising 28 feet high and more, Stow wholly rejected, deeming but fabulous his tooth, which weighed ten ounces of Troy, and skull so large that it would hold five pecks of wheat, and shin bone 6 feet in length and of marvellous greatness, though Harrison declared that he had had the tooth in his hand, on the

10th day of March in the year 1564, and the other relics were "extant and to be seen." You note he is precise as to date.

Then follows in the "Description" the fellow with a mouth 16 feet wide—no, that is much too big a swallow!

GERRARD THE GIANT
In Guildhall Museum

I turn next to a Giant's home, or must I say his castle? In Bread Street, Cheapside, stood Gerrard's Hall. Its beautiful crypt, the vaulting upheld by eighteen delicate pillars, survived to our time—till 1852. There dwelt a Giant. The race of genii native to London is small, and this was a sinuous, fleshy monster, no mere fragment of bone or tooth, or shadowy creation of fancy and thin air. Great was he at the joust. John Stow knew the fame of Gerrard the Giant. He visited the house to see its wondrous relics, objects of awe to the Elizabethan gamin and the gaping countryman, for these were evidences of the size and prowess of Gerrard well calculated to confound the incredulous.

"Of old time (Stow writes) the said house having a large and high roofed hall, there stood in the midst thereof a mighty staff, armed at the fore-end with iron and steel; it reached from the ground or floor to the very top of the hall, even as it were to touch or pierce it. This staff is said to be one of them, that the said Gerrard the Giant used to run withal in his wars. Sure, he had need of a very great horse to carry him, that should wield such a staff, but I think he was no horseman, but went all on his feet. There stood also a ladder of the same height just by the staff. I have seen them often, and inquired of the tenants the cause of their being there, but they could make me none other answer than that the one was Gerrard's staff (as ye have heard) and the ladder to ascend to the top thereof, to see the same staff to be safe, and not decayed.

"Of late years this hall is altered in building, and diverse rooms made of it. Notwithstanding the staff is removed to one corner of the hall, which remaineth of height as afore, save that the point is broken off, but the ladder is broken or sawed shorter almost by the one half, and the remnant thereof hanged on to a wall in the yard. A servant of that house (more courteous than his master) showed me the length of the staff by a wall's side, where the said staff was laid, while the

rooms over the hall were in building. I measured the ground and found it over 50 foot in length. But the master of the house saith the same to lack half a foot of 40 foot, which word of his I must take for current, for reason could he give me none. Neither would he rise from his seat to show me any further, but bade me read the Chronicles, for there he had heard."

A scurvy knave, this landlord, lacking the historical sense that spares no discomfort to search out truth, and no fit custodian for the home of a Giant, although dead. I recall how Mark Twain one night at the Savage Club bemoaned the habit of Giants (he was dealing with those of literature) to die. "Shakespeare," said he, "is dead; Milton also is dead; and I myself am not feeling very well."

Stow explored antiquity and wrote his *Survey* in Queen Elizabeth's reign. He was dissatisfied. John Gisor was Mayor of London in 1245, and had owned this hall, and many other Gisors after him, some of them Aldermen of Vintry Ward, and themselves a family of vintners. Gisor's Hall became corrupted by use to Gerrard's Hall. It was an inn before 1479, and in Stow's own time a common hostelry for the receipt of travellers. It remained a tavern till the middle nineteenth century, exposing the great painted

sign of Gerrard the Giant, made of knotted oak, now to be found in Guildhall Museum.

"Out of this Gisor's Hall (again I quote Stow) at the first building thereof, were made divers arched doors, yet to be seen, which seem not sufficient for any great monster, or other than men of common stature to pass through. The pole in the hall might be used of old time (as then the custom was in every parish) to be set up in the Summer as May-Pole, before the principal house in the Parish or Street, and to stand in the hall before the screen, decked with holme and Ivy, all the feast of Christmas. The ladder served for the decking of the may-pole, and roof of the hall. Thus much for Gisor's hall."

So falls Gerrard the Giant—and I, for one, am sorry for it. More Giants have been laid low by your sceptical antiquary than by all the Saints in Christendom.

II

THE FIRST BRITISH NAVAL DESPATCH

IT is not to be found at the Admiralty, nor amongst the early papers of our fighting services stored in that great depository of England's history, the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane. Tucked away where few would think of seeking for such a purpose, among the archives of the City of London at Guildhall, is the earliest despatch in existence giving account of an English naval battle—a letter from King Edward III. addressed to his son, the Duke of Cornwall, in which he announced the happy result of the sea fight of L'Écluse on Midsummer Day of the year 1340. This engagement, known in our history as the famous Battle of Sluys, opened the second phase of the Hundred Years' War, of which the outstanding events were Crécy and Poictiers.

A word is needed to explain how this intimate document came to the City, bringing joyful news and relief at a time of grave public anxiety. In the fourteenth century it was the duty of the Cinque Ports to furnish a navy for the King's

service; but London, though not among the five ports, by reason of its standing as the capital of the kingdom and the wealth of its merchant citizens, was expected to give a reinforcement of ships. On the outbreak of war with France, London had sent three large vessels, known as La Jonette of London, La Cogge of All Hallows, and La Seinte Mary Cogge. William Haunsard, Sheriff of London, owned the last of these. The ship did good service at Sluys, but we cannot trace the fortunes of the others. London also furnished anchors, archers, and 20,000 marks for the expeditionary Fleet. It consequently followed with patriotic and domestic interest the fortunes of the King at sea.

Edward Duke of Cornwall—then a boy of ten, afterwards renowned in chivalry as the Black Prince—was nominal Warden of the Kingdom during his father's absence, and on receipt of the news of Sluys he forwarded the letter to Guildhall for the comfort of the Londoners. The Mayor and Aldermen thereupon caused it to be inscribed in their *Liber Rubeus*, now known as Letter Book F, wherein the text, in Norman French, may still be read. I give a careful translation.

The letter is brief and soldierlike.* Fortunately

* The letter has been given in the original Norman French by M. Jules Delpit in his *Collection Générale des*

we can fill in the details from other sources. King Edward III. thus addressed his son:

[Heading in Letter Book F.]

"*Letter of our Lord the King, directed to his Son, the Duke of Cornwall, concerning the Naval Battle fought on the Day of the Nativity of St John the Baptist.*

"VERY DEAR SON,—We are sure that you are desirous of hearing good news from us, and what has happened to us since we left England. You should know that on the Thursday after we took our departure from the port of Dorewelt we waited all the day and the night following, and on the Friday, about the hour of noon, we came to the coasts of Flanders before Blankebergh, where we had a view of our enemy's fleet, which was all gathered together in the port of Swyne, and because the tide was not high enough for us to meet them, we therefore remained all that night. On the Saturday, the day of St John, well after the hour of noon, with the tide, we, in the name of God and in full trust of the justice of our quarrel entered into the said port upon our enemies, who had assembled their ships in a strong array, and who made a most noble defence all that day and the night after. But God by His power and miracle granted us the victory over our enemies, and Him we thank most devotedly for His work. You also should know that the number of soldiers

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Documents Français qui se trouvent en Angleterre (Paris, 1847), but no complete translation, so far as I can ascertain, has before been printed.

and other men at arms amounted to 35,000, of which number about 5,000 escaped, and the remainder, as we were given to understand by those who were taken prisoners alive, are lying dead in places on the coast of Flanders. On the other hand, all our ships—that is to say, the Christofre and the others that were lost at Middleburgh—have now been recovered, and we also have taken of their navy three or four great ships as large as the Christofre. The Flemings showed us goodwill in the battle from the commencement until the end. Thanks be to God our Lord for the grace He has shown us, and we and all our friends render to Him our prayers and thanks. Our intention is to remain here until we have arranged certain points with our allies and others of our friends in Flanders with whom we have business. Very dear son, may God be your guardian.

"Given under our privy seal in our ship Cogg-Thomas, on Wednesday the eve of St Peter and St Paul" [28th June, 1340].

The conditions before Sluys was fought were such as to excite grave alarm in England. A French force, landed at Portsmouth, had sacked and burnt the town, and laid waste the countryside. Later a raid was made on Southampton, on a Sunday while the inhabitants were at Mass, and the people as they poured out of the churches were slaughtered, those who escaped by flight returning to find their homes left in smoking ruins. The Channel Islands had been seized. Even London itself, fearful of attack, took steps to

fortify " with stones and palisades " and stakes driven into the bed of the Thames. Against these happenings Edward had to show but the empty title of King of France, an alliance with the Flemings, and a load of debt. An active French fleet, commanded by two gallant seamen, Nicholas Béhuchet, a Norman of humble birth, and Hugh Quièret, a Picardy knight, made the English Channel unsafe, issuing from its ports to engage in piratical acts against British merchantmen and cutting across our communications with the Continent.

At length the preparations for Edward's second invasion of France were complete. An arbitrary act of seizure of all vessels capable of carrying forty tuns, or casks, of wine, greatly strengthened the fighting value of England's fleet. It was awaiting orders to sail when news reached the English King that Philip V. of France had assembled a large fleet, manned by Normans and Genoese, then lying ready to intercept his passage. Robert Morley, the English Admiral, and Archbishop Stratford, the Chancellor, warned the King of the peril of his enterprise. Edward was undaunted. " I shall go," he is reported to have said; " those who are afraid where no fear is may stay at home." The English flotilla, numbering some two hundred ships in all and covering a great

space of water, the big ships, the pressed vessels, and the little "floynes" taking their proper place and order, stood out to sea from Orwell, in Essex, in the forenoon of the 22nd June, 1340, arriving next day off Blankenberghe, on the Flanders coast.

There the English seamen obtained from the mastheads a distant view of the fleets of Béhuchet and Quièret anchored off Sluys, at that time a considerable harbour upon which opened the stream and canal that bore the world's traffic to the great mart of Bruges.

Edward dropped anchor. Three knights put ashore to reconnoitre returned with an alarming report. They had counted 200 ships of war, besides smaller vessels, and nineteen ships "so large that they had never seen the like." With the enemy was the great English ship Christopher, which had been captured by the French after it had carried Edward on his first crossing to Antwerp. Their masts "were like trees in the forest." It is certain that the English were outnumbered. Edward determined to fight when daylight came next morning; and it is curiously illustrative of the time that he had trusted to the fortunes of battle the presence of "fifty noble ladies of honour" who were going to wait upon Queen Philippa in Flanders, his first care being to

place them in safety under a strong guard. The English stood out to sea on the morning of the 24th June, then bore down upon the French, who had drawn up their ships in four lines across the passage to the harbour, and lashed the vessels together with strong chains, awaiting attack.

We, too, of the living generation know this sea-ground over which King Edward III.'s sailors six centuries ago manœuvred—know it well. We call it Zeebrugge, scene of the last glorious exploit on the grand scale in which British seamen engaged in the greatest of our wars. That it was, though the coast outline has much changed, and the actual harbour has silted up with the tides' and currents' perpetual wash, and Sluys to-day lies inland, sand shifted by the wind having fairled the low dunes. Often I wondered when England thrilled with the account of the Zeebrugge fight that in our forgetfulness none had recalled the near association of the Naval victory of Sluys.

"The spirits of your fathers, Shall start from every wave." I think they were there, the invisible watchers of that great day, not less real, to be sure, than those "Angels of Mons" whose vision some have said appeared to our men in the trenches; but we had forgotten.

The ships fought without guns. Although at Crécy, six years later, were used very small

bombards, which one chronicler relates "with fire, and a noise like God's thunder, threw little balls of iron to frighten the horses," it is certain that no gunpowder was burnt at Sluys. A sea fight much resembled a land fight, only in confined space, and was fought, not by seamen, but by soldiers. The likeness to siege warfare on land was heightened by the appointment of the more important ships, carrying "towers" from which heavy stones and other missiles were hurled down. The decks were packed with bowmen and spearmen and swordsmen. Battle tactics were simple; the preliminary exchanges of arrows having done their work on the crowded decks, it became the object of every commander in attack to lash his against an enemy ship and board her, after which everything depended upon individual valour.

"This battle," says Froissart of Sluys, "was right fierce and horrible, for battles by sea are more dangerous and fiercer than battles by land, for at sea there is no retreat nor fleeing; there is no remedy but to fight and abide fortune, and every man to show his prowess."

It all took place nearly six hundred years ago. Chroniclers of different nationalities, with differing racial prejudices, are naturally confused. But it would seem that the first English attempt failed

against the enemy's serried ranks. Then King Edward bethought himself of a ruse. Turning his ships about, he made off in flight. The French at once unchained their vessels and raised sail to pursue, and while they were in disorder the English again bore down upon them, the sun behind their masts and the wind filling the sails. As in so many other mediæval battles, it was the skill of the English archers which first influenced the fortunes of the day, their dense flights of arrows doing such terrible execution that the Genoese cross-bowmen in the French ships were driven from the decks, and unable effectively to reply. Close action opened when Morley, the English Admiral, laid his craft alongside the great Christopher, which was boarded and after a struggle taken, and soon the ships of the opposing fleets were closely grappled together. With loud shouts of defiance, the English men-at-arms, calling upon their Saints to succour them, in the manner of the days of chivalry—knights and yeomen and plebeian soldiers—boarded their enemy, and with battle-axe and sword and pike fought out the issue on decks that soon were slippery with blood.

Morley, in the captured Christopher, broke the enemy's second line. A panic is said to have seized the third line, which retained some forma-

tion, and the men leapt into the sea; over two thousand perished by drowning. The fourth line, consisting of sixty craft chained together, offered a brave resistance till nightfall, when some made good their retreat. Barbavera, the commander of the Genoese auxiliaries, also withdrew some of his shattered ships in the darkness, but when the battle ended next morning the magnificent Norman fleet, comprising some three-fourths of the whole, was at the victor's mercy. Edward, who himself fought in the thick of the hand-to-hand struggle, had been wounded in the thigh.

I quote the *French Chronicle of London*, to be found among the British Museum manuscripts, by a friendly writer who describes the sea fight in the language of chivalry. The mêlée opened "to the sound of trumpets, nakers, viols, tabors, and many other kinds of minstrelsy"—how many an age-old shock of arms that passage recalls!

"Then did our King, with three hundred ships, vigorously assail the French with their five hundred great ships and gallies, and eagerly did our people exert great diligence to give battle to the French. Our archers and our arbalesters began to fire as densely as hail falls in winter, and our engineers hurled so steadily that the French had not power to look or to hold up their heads. And in the meantime, while this assault lasted,

our English people with a great force boarded their gallies, and fought with the French hand-to-hand, and threw them out of their ships and gallies. And always our King encouraged them to fight bravely with his enemies, he himself being in the cog called 'Thomas of Winchelsee.' And at the hour of tierce [nine o'clock in the morning] there came to them a ship of London, which belonged to William Haunsard, and it did much good in the same battle. For the battle was so severe and so hardly contested that the assault lasted from noon all day and all night and the morrow until the hour of prime [six o'clock] and when the battle was discontinued no Frenchman remained alive save only Spaudefisshe, who took to flight with four-and-twenty ships and gallies."

Quièret and Béhuchet fell into Edward's hands, the former mortally wounded. There is a Norman legend that Béhuchet, when brought captive before the English King, answered some taunt with a cuff, whereupon the angry monarch hanged him forthwith from the mast of his ship. This has no support from English authorities, and obviously is unlikely. The victory was complete, but Edward no doubt exaggerated the numbers when he reported thirty thousand of his enemies slain. It seems inconceivable that the

French could have put thirty-five thousand men afloat in the small vessels of those days.

The Cogge Thomas, which flew Edward's standard at Sluys, and after the fight remained his favourite ship, was sunk ten years later in the no less famous Battle of L'Espagnols-sur-Mer, the first attempted invasion of England by Spain. A huge Spanish "nief" struck her so hard amidships that her mainmast went by the board, and the craft rapidly filled.

Edward landed at Sluys amid the rejoicings of the Flemings, and his march in the subsequent campaigns curiously recalls the far greater struggle in which English and French as close Allies have so recently been engaged. Mons, Valenciennes, Cambrai, Bapaume, Péronne, St Quentin — all these appear; his footsteps closely follow that *via sacra* now hallowed by so many thousands of our own dead.

III

A GARDEN OF MEMORIES

THE generality of people when brought up at the little railed plot on Tower Green, as they make a circuit of inspection of the Tower of London, regard it as The Tower's execution ground of so many tragic memories, which, of course, it is not. Always there seems a hush about this place. Three English Queens perished there, for "Jane the Queene" I count one of them, though her reign lasted but nine troubled days; the others, Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard—Anne by the Calais headsman's sword, her companions in destiny by the axe. It is hallowed ground. The aged Countess of Salisbury, Margaret Pole, suffered there also, refusing to bend her grey head to the stroke. "So should traitors do, and I am none," she protested.

I suppose some qualm on the part of Henry VIII. and his dour daughter, some idea of what was due to their sex, induced them to order the execution of the women in comparative privacy

within The Tower's walls. Fear influenced Elizabeth's councillors when deciding that Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, a rebel to the great Queen with whom he had long been a favourite, should die there. London's populace still held him in affection, the Queen's hold weakening with cantankerous old age. Derrick, the executioner, when leaving The Tower, his work done, was assailed and beaten by an enraged mob, till the Sheriffs rescued him from those who would have taken his life.

Viscountess Rochford was another who perished on Tower Green—five women and a man,* that is, the whole company. What are six heads in the bloody records of The Tower?

Often I stray on to Tower Hill, revisiting that grim spot, now embowered in green, where heads fell, so many more numerous than these. It is as quiet as any nook in London, for a serenity broods over the place since the tumult of which it has known so much died away (I have in mind Strafford and the final scene, when they say two-hundred thousand persons crowded the hill to acclaim his death)—a restful place on a summer's

* In an earlier age the Earl of Hastings, accused by Richard Duke of Gloucester of necromancy, was hurriedly decapitated below the Keep. But there is no certainty of the site of this execution.

day, away from the hot City pavements and the people surging over them. My only company has been the pleasant cries and prattle of children. You must search for the public execution ground outside The Tower. It was a right or privilege that the City for centuries held that execution of the capital sentence should be carried out by the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex; and on the City's ground, at the gate of The Tower, the Sheriffs formally have claimed the body of the doomed man—a right granted by charter, confirmed by successive English monarchs, and in times past guarded jealously.

It lies to-day within a garden, this blood-soaked execution ground. The Londoner heedlessly passes by. Out of Trinity Square a leafy space has been preserved, where trees and shrubs throw black shadows over the close-cropped lawn, one of those oases of green that strangers find with pleasant surprise within the City. The Trinity House now has its care. It is ringed about with an iron railing, and the gates are locked. A few residents of the locality, having keys, send in their children and nurses, and there I have met the pretty grandchildren of General Pipon, the resident Major of The Tower. You can be alone. I should have been locked out, like the rest of London's millions, having no right of

Photo by Mr. Lionel Gowing

THE EXECUTION GROUND ON TOWER HILL: WINTER

entrance, but that I made friends with the gardener.

He tends the young grass that grows in the spring and brushes away the leaves that fall in autumn, and has no worries with memories. He will point out to you, with pride that it should be in his keeping, a little square paved with dark brick, of some twelve feet span on every side, with, in the centre, a stone tablet. Few words are cut into the tablet. They tell that this is the

SITE OF THE
ANCIENT SCAFFOLD
HERE
THE EARL OF KILMARNOCK
AND LORD BALMARINO
SUFFERED
18 AUGUST, 1746.

The curious may see the stone through the rails. Thus it commemorates, most inadequately, the awful tragedy of this place—a spot that is associated (I quote Lord Macaulay's words, as I have done before, upon the cemetery of St Peter ad Vincula church which it filled) "with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny, with the savage triumph of implacable

enemies, with the inconstancy, the ingratitude, the cowardice of friends, with all the miseries of fallen greatness and of blighted fame."

The happy children here at play have no memories. Some day there will come into their minds a realization of death, when play shall cease and joyful anticipations of the morrow be no more—a horror of the unknown voyage. They will put it aside, rarely to be recalled, but life thereafter will never be quite the same to them. Their play is undisturbed by any associations of this place of blood, and I ask for no better companions there—lustful young life at its dawn where life itself, when the mind is strong and the capacity for work greatest, has been violently ended. A mite of a boy—a spot of flaming vermilion amidst the greenery—calling to me over the very place of execution, toddled across it to give to the old gentleman his Teddy Bear.

Alas! my years have passed the fascination of Teddy Bears, and my thoughts were roaming. The lessons of history are for the schoolmen, and its immediate reward for those who court the jade the vision it sets up of past times, and men and women who peopled familiar places, bringing back the life of dead streets and empty hearths. I saw this ground, not as it is, but as our forefathers knew it. The grey fortress-prison of The

Tower, defying time, was the same, save that its walls rose sheer from the water-filled moat. But Tower Hill had no trees to relieve its hardness, and rarely a blade of sparse grass survived the trampling of this ground into mud by thousands of feet. I have no envy of the "good old times," nor wish to shoulder my way among fellow-creatures assembled here as spectators, wanting, anxious to witness the awful scenes—the descending axe's blow, the head rolling over the sawdust that strewed the scaffold's floor. This common land lay bare, dedicated to death and committed to no other use, an open hill-side wind swept from the river, an accursed place, which all life shunned. A path ran half obliterated, and in places stamped out of recognition. Byward Tower laid out its drawbridge over the moat.

Opposite, at an angle, was a little shelter called the Bulwark Gate. That has long since been cleared away. It was there the exchange of custody was made, the Lieutenant of The Tower handed over his prisoner to the Sheriffs, and the sad little procession, marshalmen bearing pikes and halberds guarding the doomed man, tramped the rising ground to where the scaffold and the block were raised, the masked headsman standing ready. The voice of the Tower Hill orator, airing the wrongs of his class, has come over to

me, breaking the quietude about this spot, and I have wondered if he has any sense of historical proportion.

London regards its old execution ground with unconcern, and few, I daresay, know of its existence—not three in a thousand of those who are drawn by The Tower's association with our national history to visit the grey old fortress. I have no wish to see it in any other than its present use, a garden of memories.

"See me safe up, Mr Lieutenant, and for my coming down let me shift for myself!" The good Sir Thomas More said this, climbing the creaking scaffold at Tower Hill, his quaint humour irrepressible when all his hopes were in heaven's blue vault. I recall from many pictures that pale, lean face. He did not, like Fisher, robe for death, but came in an old frieze gown, bearing in his hand a red cross. After prayers, the executioner offered to tie his eyes. "I will cover them myself," he said; he bound them in a cloth brought with him, then kneeling laid his head upon the block. The stroke was about to fall, when he signed for a moment's delay. His white beard had grown long in prison, and he put it aside. "Pity that should be cut," he murmured, "that has not committed treason." With these strange words, the strangest perhaps ever uttered at such a time, the

lips most famous in Europe for eloquence and wisdom closed for ever.

The horrid indignities with which the mangled body of John Fisher was treated upon this spot cry down the centuries the infamy of Henry VIII. The Cardinal's hat given by Pope Paul III. while Fisher lay in The Tower never crowned that aged head. A sentence by a contemporary who has described the end tells all we want in portraiture of the man—" so much wasted as to look death itself in human shape." He was past eighty. He could not walk. Lifted in a chair between two Lieutenant's men, he was carried to the Bulwark Gate for delivery over to the Sheriffs, and so carried up the hill to execution. The headsmen stripped the body upon the scaffold of the shirt and all the clothes, there leaving the corpse naked, a sight for the awe-stricken rabble to gaze at; " where it remained after that sort for the most part of the day, saving that one, for pity and humanity's sake, cast a little straw over it, and about eight o'clock in the evening commandment came from the King's Commissioners to such as watched about the dead body (for it was still watched with many halberds and weapons) that they should cause it to be buried. Whereupon two of the watches took it upon a halberd between them, and so carried it to a churchyard by, called

Allhallows Barking, where on the north side of the churchyard, hard by the wall, they digged a grave with their halberds."

Allhallows Barking is in sight, a stone's-throw distant, and the river flows by over which Fisher's head was exposed on a pike. Rays of light were observed to shine about it—that was the report. Such a concourse of people assembled on London Bridge, looking up, that neither horse nor man could pass, and the head was removed and thrown into the Thames. The martyr's body found final sepulture in St Peter ad Vincula.

Tower Hill another day witnessed a strange scene. Intrigue, ambition, and the machinations of enemies had brought the Protector Somerset to the scaffold, about which was gathered an immense throng. He was addressing the people, when there arose a great stir, "the sound as of a great number of horses running on to the people, to over-run them," or of guns shooting. Machyn, the diarist, was present. "Many fell to the ground for fear (he says) for they that were at one side thought no other but that one was killing the other, that they fell down to the ground one upon another with their halberds; some fell into the ditch of The Tower and other places: and a hundred were in The Tower ditch, and some ran away for fear." This until they espied a body of

men approaching on horse and on foot, and at their head Sir Anthony Browne, Sheriff of Surrey. Whereupon there burst out a cry of "Pardon, pardon, pardon! God save the King!" Caps and cloaks were hurled into the air. It happened only that the inhabitants of certain outlying hamlets, as Haggerston, Newington and Shoreditch, being commanded upon such occasions to give attendance with weapons, under their Lieutenant, arrived late—the execution being at eight o'clock—and seeing the Duke already on the scaffold, they pressed forward with haste.

"There is no pardon, good people, there is no such thing," said the doomed man. And he was right. The Tower itself has known more mercy than this merciless place.

Laud gave up his life on Tower Hill. Some said as he came out to execution that he had painted his face that morning purple; but the standers-by were hushed into sudden awe on seeing that purple face turn ghastly white. Edward Stafford, the Buckingham of Shakespeare's speech of matchless pathos; Somerset, just mentioned, and John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, were others. "There lyeth before the high altar two Dukes between two Queens," is the simple record of the burial of these last in St Peter ad Vincula's crowded cemetery. Two Howards,

Henry Earl of Surrey and Thomas Duke of Norfolk; the rebel Monmouth, mangled by a nerveless executioner before he died—the names, and these are but a few, form almost an epitome of England's history. Thomas Cromwell, himself responsible for the violent deaths of so many, perished by the axe on this same execution ground. Fierce hatreds have been stilled here, and some lives that have been ignominious. The proudest blood of England has poured out where stands this little square of brick. If away in space there is a cavern which stores up the sounds heard on earth, it will echo the menacing murmur of exultant, vengeful passions that have swayed the rocking crowds upon Tower Hill, the low utterance of anguish and despair when man stood friendless there before his Maker, and the after silence I feel sure will be broken by the children's rippling laughter.

It is not my task to call to the ghosts of all who have died in this garden, but in the tablet's inadequate commemoration one name is wanting. I do not understand the omission. Kilmarnock and Balmarino have their names there. Why not Simon Fraser Lord Lovat, who completes the three "Rebel Lords"?—the last man who suffered death by beheading in England. That alone should justify his remembrance. A villain,

you may say, traitorous, treacherous, double-dealing, so let his dishonoured bones crumble into dust forgotten. Simon Fraser was that in the estimation of his English contemporaries, and I should have valued their judgment lightly but that his wild and stormy career speaks for itself. Posterity has softened the lines of the portrait, made him man, not devil, shaded the hoofs that contemporaries drew. But it has not altered the verdict.

It is difficult to get back the atmosphere of the time of the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. Scotland was then a remote place. London citizens, alarmed by tales of Highlanders' excesses that enlarged as they travelled down from the border, broke into disgraceful panic in dread of the arrival of an army of bare-legged Northerners to sack their quiet homes. I take no pride in those nerveless ancestors of mine.

Lovat himself did not fight for "bonnie Charlie"—as worthless a Stuart as the majority. He was an old man, racked with disease. Exactly how old he was it is not possible to tell, for it was his humour to exaggerate his age. Mr Mackenzie, his latest biographer, has some evidence that he was seventy-two at the time of his death. The Highland chieftain was a sworn adherent (for the moment) of the Hanoverian

dynasty. What mattered an oath or two? Lovat, always a Jacobite at heart but cast by nature for an intriguer, fought against the Old Pretender at the rising in Scotland in 1715, and by taking Inverness he gave to that rising a staggering blow. He had served both sides, had been a pensioner of both, had betrayed both. Twice he had lived in outlawry, and for months had roamed the most inaccessible mountains and glens of his native country, a fugitive condemned to arrest and execution for high treason, till a change in the English Crown won for him a pardon.

What masterful manner of man was Simon Fraser he showed in the well-known incident of his marriage at twenty. Failing in his plan to secure an Atholl heiress, he forcibly married her mother, introducing a clergyman into her room at midnight. The bagpipes were blown to stifle the lady's cries. He might have seemed a legendary figure had not Scotland's wild lawlessness the testimony of a thousand witnesses. It was his ambition throughout his scheming life to be "the biggest Lovat that ever was," and at Castle Downie, in Inverness-shire, when his fortune was in, he kept feudal state. A guest at his abundant table has picturesquely drawn the Highland scene, the lairds of the neighbourhood seated at the

principal table, next to them the duinewassels, or gentlemen of the clan, lower down the tenants or common husbandmen, and below the utmost extent of the board, at the door, and sometimes without the door of the hall, gathered a multitude of Frasers destitute of shoes or bonnets, regaling themselves upon the lord's bounty.

The bait of a Dukedom of Fraser proffered by the Chevalier bought Lovat over. He was too infirm for action, but his clan awaited only his word to throw themselves with Highland ferocity into the struggle. He sent his son with the fiery cross to rouse the countryside, while himself professing loyalty to King George, which none believed. Lovat was not at Culloden. Waiting at Gortelug to receive news, he saw the wild and desolate vale below him suddenly fill with horsemen, riding furiously. A child who was there in after life recorded that the unexpected appearance of the confused multitude had seemed to her a vision of fairies, and that in accordance with Highland tradition she strove to refrain from moving her eyelid lest the vision should disappear.

Lovat's old eyes saw no fairies. They saw from a hillside—he had fled precipitately—the spectacle of Castle Downie ablaze, set on fire by "Butcher" Cumberland's soldiers. Prince

Charles Edward he met for the first and only time in the rout. He urged further resistance. But the gambler in lives for a Crown had staked and lost. Then, confiding his life to his faithful clansmen, those fine Scots whom no inducement of life or reward would turn from loyalty to the chieftain, unable himself to walk a step unsupported, Lovat was carried by them mile after mile over hill and glen to Scotland's west coast, and in an island on Loch Morar believed that he had found safe refuge, for he possessed the only boat on the lake. A searching man-of-war's party found him at last, concealed in a hollow tree with his legs showing, muffled up in flannel like those of a gouty alderman. Another story was that he was disturbed when lying comfortably ensconced between two feather beds.

Neither matters; he was safe trapped.

He was conveyed in a horse litter from Stirling to Edinburgh, and thence by Berwick over the long journey to London. The White Hart Inn, St Albans, was the last resting-place, and there Hogarth saw him and drew the characteristic portrait here reproduced. Lovat, once secure in The Tower, had no illusions as to his fate. As he passed in a coach to Westminster Hall for trial by his peers, a woman looked in at the window and called coarsely to him:

SIMON FRASER, LORD LOVAT
From a print by Hogarth

"You ugly old dog, don't you think you will have that frightful head cut off?"

"You ugly old bitch, I believe I shall," he retorted.

The tide of his life was ebbing out, but while any chance remained the old fox tried his cunning. He wrote to Cumberland, reminding him that often he had carried him in his arms in the parks at Kensington and Hampton Court, and held him up for the admiration of his Royal grandfather. What use could there be in the destruction of a hundred very infirm old men like himself, past seventy, and without the least use of hands, legs or knees? A gruff reply from the Prince's secretary was the only response. The evidence of connivance at rebellion was overwhelming, and there was no real defence. Horace Walpole wrote to Mann:

"I have been living at Old Lovat's trial. It lasted seven days. The old creature's behaviour has been foolish, and at last indecent. When he came to The Tower he told them that if he were not so old and infirm they would find it difficult to keep him there. They told him they had kept much younger. 'Yes,' said he, 'but they were inexperienced; they had not broke so many gaols as I have.' At his own house he used to say, that for thirty years of his life he never saw a gallows but it made his neck ache. . . . The last two days he behaved ridiculously, joking and making everybody laugh, even at the sentence. When he withdrew, he said, 'Adieu, my Lords, we shall never meet again in the same place.'

He says he will be hanged, for that his neck is so short and bended that he should be struck in the shoulders. I did not think it possible to feel so little as I did at so melancholy a spectacle, but tyranny and villainy wound up by buffoonery took off all edge of concern."

Lovat had played his part, and now could throw aside the mask. He did not ask for his life. There came from him no whining appeal for mercy and clemency. Little doubt that he was a great villain, but his end was nothing ignoble. Walpole allows that he died extremely well. He joked with the Major of The Tower on the morning of execution. "I am preparing myself, sir, for a place where hardly any majors and very few lieutenant-generals go." He gave to the warders a bit of his philosophy. "The end of all human grandeur is like this snuff of tobacco," he declared as he knocked the ashes out of his pipe. Others greater than Lovat have arrived by toilsome roads at that same truth.

He said he was to die as a Highland chief should do—that was, not in his bed. He passed his compliments to the Governor's wife on leaving his prison, and was conveyed in the Governor's coach to the Bulwark Gate, where the Sheriffs awaited him, and again by coach to a house before the scaffold.

There his friends were permitted to gather about him. When a gentleman offered prayer,

Lovat called a warder to help him to kneel, and afterwards prayed silently for a brief space. He took a little brandy and bitters. The prospect of immediate death found him remarkably composed. He desired that his clothes might be delivered to his friends with his corpse, and asked of the Sheriffs that his head might be received in a cloth and put into the coffin. A further request was oddly thought of in the circumstances. It was that the head should not be held up to the multitude's gaze at the four corners of the scaffold, as had been customary at the execution of all traitors since mediæval times. Learning that his desire would be conceded, though no written order had been received to allow it, the old man was obviously pleased.

A couple of warders gripped him tightly, supporting his weight as he toilsomely ascended the few steps to the scaffold. Seeing then for the first time the great concourse of people that had assembled, a flash of his old humour came back. "God save us!" he said, looking round, "why should there be such a bustle about taking off a grey old head, that cannot get up three steps without three bodies to support it?"

An overcrowded stand fell, some persons being killed and others maimed. "The greater the mischief the better the sport," Lovat is said to

have remarked, as though himself merely a spectator of the day's event. But so many phrases have been attributed to him that I am sceptical of crediting any.

He was placed in a chair, and asked for the executioner, to whom he presented ten guineas in a purse. Desiring to see the axe, he felt its edge, and said he believed it would do. Soon he rose, looked at his coffin, read the inscription with apparent approval, and sitting down again repeated from Horace the line—

"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori."

Did old Lovat believe himself a patriot dying for his country, and that that made sweet the sacrifice? Who shall say? Others as deep in double dealing as he have held such flattering to their souls, and therein have found consolation. He knelt at the block, but being placed too near had to obtain assistance from the warder to be drawn back. Mayhap there flashed through his mind at that moment a vision of what in the circumstances could not be—the stately funeral of a Highland chieftain that he had foreseen for himself, with every piper from Edinburgh to John-o'-Groats assembled to play his dirge. That was his last unsatisfied vanity.

After half a minute he delivered the sign by dropping his handkerchief to the ground, and the

executioner severed the head from the body. The old fox died like a lion.

Certainly I think his remembrance should be borne on the memorial stone.

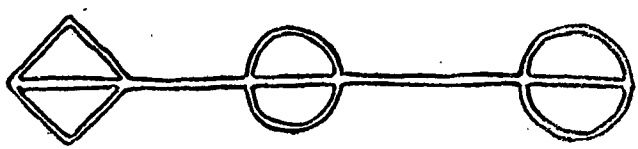
In my day the house was standing, overlooking Trinity Square and the place of execution, where Lovat and the other rebel lords of "the '45," Kilmarnock and Balmerino, were taken for a few moments' rest before being passed out to the scaffold. It was the north corner building of Catherine Court, but it has been swept away like so much else about this quiet end of the City, where the Port of London Authority is erecting its immense new offices, destroying most things. They will show you in a crypt of The Tower a headsman's axe, and at its side the block upon which Simon Fraser Lord Lovat was decapitated —the last a heavy piece of gnarled oak, standing 20½ inches high and brown with oil and age.

Two deep original cuts are upon it, athwart the flat and narrow ledge between the large space scooped out on one side to receive the shoulders and the small recess opposite for the chin. It used to be said that the cuts were made when the axe fell that ended the lives of Lords Kilmarnock and Balmerino, and I believe the old label so gave its story; but almost invariably two blows were needed completely to sever the head from the

trunk, and the fact that there are these and no more shows that the block was used only once. It was long in possession of John Poyndon, a warder, who when his own death drew near devised this gruesome gift to The Tower.

Old Simon Fraser Lord Lovat was the last man beheaded on Tower Hill, a full century and three quarters ago. Sir Simon de Burley, tutor of King Richard II., was the first to suffer, on this same place in the year 1388, "the more honourable death of the axe." Simons both. And there will be no more. The headsman's craft has gone from out our midst—a lost British industry.

Lovat's coffin plate, bearing the words "Simon Dominus Fraser de Lovat. Decollat Apr. 9,



1747," engraved in the lead, and the age wrongly given as eighty, you may see on the west wall by the door of the little church of St Peter ad Vincula within The Tower. His remains were placed in the same church, beneath a stone curiously marked with two rings and a lozenge joined by a shaft, where Kilmarnock and Balmerino rested

by his side. You almost step upon it, entering. They have no other monument, these three victims of "the '45," and no more than a share is theirs of the memories that cluster so thickly about that little square of paved brick upon the execution ground, whereon the children play.

Stay, I am wrong. I had thought that London bore no remembrance of the Scottish Rebellion, long since discounted and forgotten, but there is a tavern near by that honours them in its sign. In the parlour of "The Three Lords," Minories, during whatever the licensing hours may be (there are many more learned than myself in these matters) you still may pledge a health to "Charlie over the Border."

IV

AN ELECTION OF SHERIFFS

DID you ever find Guildhall locked and barred against you, with two-and-twenty gates in line, two-and-twenty heads peering over the tops? Each head surmounted by a gold-laced, three-cornered cap, conferring dignity. Two-and-twenty maces held in hand by the owners of the heads. An awesome sight, I warrant you. I have so found Guildhall. There must be great doings in the City this day, I reasoned, for Guildhall Porch thus to be fortified with outer defences, debarring a citizen in his plain civic duty of paying his rates.

An election of Sheriffs was to take place, as always on Midsummer Day of each year, and these were precautions taken to secure that none but the elect of the City should participate. We know on Elizabethan authority that "of a subject, there is no public officer of any city in Europe that may compare in port and countenance with the Lord Mayor of London during the time of his office." Next to my Lord Mayor himself, no

civic official stands so high as the Sheriff. Let no intruder raise his unauthorized hand to vote him into office. I looked at that line of defences, and imagination reeled.

Perhaps it was the martial array of heads, the gold lace, the maces held so threateningly, that made me think the owners of these faces were fierce men. I am told that is not so. They are the Beadles of the various Livery Companies. They are fathers of families, many of them, good and lawful men of the City, who pay their scot and bear their lot, and so they all say (I fall into this habit of speaking at Guildhall). But I did not feel myself called upon to challenge the two-and-twenty defenders of the City's undoubted right and privilege to elect its Sheriffs without hindrance from outside authority. What chance should I have had in the mêlée, with all those knobby maces, like whirlbats, raining blows about my head and shoulders ?

The defenders do not stand each in his own little fort, as you might think, for there is nothing behind the gates. They are in line, ready to reinforce should assault be levied upon any particular place of entry. That is a trick they learnt from the European War, I do not doubt.

The heads over the high wooden gates held me fascinated, and it was some time before I noticed

above each gate strange writings. "Tallow Chandlers, Tin Plate Workers, Turners, Tylers," was one. "Barbers, Basket Makers, Blacksmiths, Bowyers," appeared over another. These last are men who bend the English yew. Only those free of the City, and members of one or another (or several) of the Livery Companies, are qualified to vote for Sheriffs. Whatever his Company, the elector must approach at his own marked gate, and the Beadle is there to recognize him, and, failing recognition, to challenge before giving admittance.

I found myself an onlooker at this particular Common Hall—by what devious means the deed was compassed do not inquire. As stealthily I stepped through the mediæval porch, there went ahead Sir Homewood Crawford, the City Solicitor. Him I avoided. Long ago Common Council had committed to the City Solicitor the prosecution of parties hired by interested persons to come to Guildhall for the purpose of disturbing Shrieval elections. There must have been reason for that in "the good old times."

Strong in innocence of such intention, I entered great Guildhall, where my sense was refreshed by the pleasant smell of sweet herbs. Crushed under the feet, their scent pervaded the atmosphere. They had been thickly strewn about the daïs, for thereon the Mighty Ones of the City were

shortly to take their places. This was for their protection. It is an ancient custom, bringing back the fragrance of long dead years, dating from a time when there was danger of Plague or other infection in any large company of men. The strong smell of herbs was then counted a prophylactic. For this reason the Judge of Assize had herbs laid upon his desk, to ward off the dreaded gaol fever, borne perhaps by the shuddering prisoner. The Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs and high officers were in like manner guarded at elections from contamination, should it come from the voters massed below.

Soon the Mighty Ones entered in procession, a blaze of red coats and gold epaulettes, scarlet fur-trimmed robes and fur hats, the Sword borne upright and the Mace shouldered—colour rioting against the grey old walls. The Lord Mayor, tall, a striking figure, was in full dress, slashes of gold lace lighting his black gown, wearing the feathered hat. (Congratulations, my Lord Baron, on your new dignity.) The Sheriffs robed in scarlet, Aldermen who had passed the Chair the same, and many Aldermen in purple gowns. I noticed that each of these, and also the Recorder, in wig and gown, the Town Clerk, similarly attired, and others, carried in the hand a neatly tied posy of flowers. That is another venerated City custom,

the carrying of the bouquet, a grace of times past brought into times present. These, thought I, are much better than the drab surroundings when last I cast my vote in a County Council election. The City of London, boasting a continuous history longer than that of any other Corporation, holds fast to every one of its venerable traditions. It has the saving grace of being picturesque in all its actions, so welcome in these grey days.

Some shallow minds affect derision of the City's civic splendour, the steel and fur and gold, which I hold to be among its most valuable possessions, based as is all this state upon immemorial custom. It survives because it is so old; it may be envied by younger corporations; it cannot without offence be copied.

Common Hall was opened in due form. "Oyez, oyez!" called the Common Crier, stepping to the front of the daïs, and from his first words I realized how little yet the City Fathers felt safe from intrusion. "All you," declared the Common Crier, "who are not Liverymen depart this Hall, on pain of imprisonment!" I experienced a cold shiver, though the June day was warm. Others that officer admonished to "draw near and give your attendance. God save the King!"

Then from the Common Serjeant came an announcement that brought back the spirit of a

mediæval age. I looked around for foot-men in armour, at least for halberdiers. But of these the City has none. The Lord Mayor and his highly placed brethren would withdraw while the votes were being given, in order that the Livery should exercise, free and unfettered, their undoubted right of election undeterred by their presence. I understood, recalling what Harrison had written, that in port and countenance none can compare with my Lord Mayor. Should he frown when a candidate's name came forward, how should the elector be unmoved, or his choice be unfettered? At a signal from the Lord Mayor the procession was re-formed, and passed out of Guildhall to the Council Chamber, where Sword and Mace were rested upon a bed of luxurious rose blooms for the interval of waiting.

The colour went out of Guildhall with them, but the fragrance remained, and there remained the two outgoing Sheriffs, scarlet clad, one at each corner of the daïs front. The names of candidates were called over. Those for Sheriff numbered seven, but three were passed over, their appearance being formal for later nomination. It was not until the fourth, one Oakup, C.C., was called, that first was raised the cry of "All, all!" and a forest of right hands was held up. Two new Sheriffs were to be elected, and this was the first

actual man. Beside each Sheriff, right and left, a short flagstaff was reared, and the name of the candidate contained in a frame, in movable letters placed in order to spell it out, was run up. Dick Whittington was elected Sheriff in this precise way five centuries ago. No doubt he had smelt the sweet herbs strewing the floor, as I had smelt them, and had seen his name run up in chalked or roughly painted letters, with by chance indifferent spelling. But these movable letters are of the age of the typewriter and American office routine, a modernism which the City should at once cast out. To my eye, they constituted the one blemish on the time-honoured ceremonial.

The elector's choice is given by show of hands, and the Sheriffs, each with white-gloved finger pointing, made the count—no easy task when the votes rank in hundreds. The counts agreed. Candidate No. 5 had a bare dozen supporters; but the name of No. 6 being submitted, Guildhall up to its rafters rang again with the cry of "All, all!" and again a forest of hands was elevated. It was plain which two had the bulk of support. The count was repeated. No. 7 had a few dozen hands, and there was a ribald cry of "All, all!" and some laughter. I had rather the limitation of one man to one Company was observed. It was so in old days. I do not think that members of four or five Companies turning up to vote *en bloc*

for "their man" makes for that real freedom of election which the Liveries justly claim. The Sheriffs announced the figures. A poll of the Livery was promptly demanded on behalf of one of the defeated candidates, and, pending report to the Lord Mayor, Common Hall went on with the next business, that being the election of Bridgemasters and Ale Conners.

The office of Bridgemaster is one of small profit, rooted in antiquity, going back to the time when London had only the one stone bridge built by King John. Its duties are light, and I understand the bearer is charged to see by personal inspection once or twice each week that the City bridges have not slid into the Thames at night, or are not in such disrepair as to make that event likely. The post is usually given to some brother who has served the City well, and from whom Fortune has withheld her favours. There are two Bridgemasters, and but two candidates presenting themselves, both were re-elected.

Of Ale Conners, on the other hand, the City requires seven. A thirsty City, this London, with repute for the good quality of its ale not lightly to be gainsaid. In olden days it drank its potations deep; it, perhaps, is not without significance that the *Liber Albus*, that code of City laws and precedents compiled by Richard Whittington, Mayor, and John Carpenter, his Town Clerk, men-

tions no ale measure of less capacity than a quart. The Conners must see to it that quality is maintained, and report to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen should infractions by brewsters come to their notice; for the brewsters, or ale-wives, did most of the mediæval trade in brewing ale, which curiously was not accounted an occupation for men. How much of the right of search and taste in City taverns survives in practice I cannot say, but there has been no legal impairment of the ancient powers, and the Ale Conners still are elected by the Livery, as in old times.

The Mayoral procession returned into Guildhall, Sword and Mace having been raised from their bed of rose blooms; the Sheriffs reported the result of the show of hands and the demand for a poll. A legal gentleman in wig and gown stepped to the front, but Common Hall having by this time relapsed into a buzz of conversation, his words were inaudible. I thought perhaps he dealt in canon law, and was giving the sanction of the Church to the election, but that was not so. "Oyez, oyez!" in the strident tones of the Common Crier again called all to attention, and with the announcement that the poll for Sheriffs would take place at Guildhall on the next succeeding Friday, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 7 p.m., the ceremony, which held me greatly interested, was at an end.

Fortunate London! Venice, which held the gorgeous East in fee, has passed. The Grand Mogul, seated amidst the splendour of Oriental magnificence—where is that despot? But this free City of London of a thousand years keeps alive and honours to-day customs and ceremonies as old as were theirs. Long may it flourish in the centuries that are to come. We have a madness to reduce everything in public life to the level of the black coat, and after that is accomplished no doubt to the shirt-sleeves. I agree that ceremonial cannot aptly be created to-day, but having it as our inheritance, why not value it? It is only the dour, unimaginative souls who rail at ceremony, and pity there are so many of them.

I found my friend Day, C.C., a lawyer, come from out the mass of the electors to whisper into my ear, "Oakup has by far the biggest show of hands, I think he is safe at the poll;" and he confided to me that if Oakup were returned Sheriff he would himself be his Under-Sheriff.

"Then you will have to attend any executions of criminals there are about, the Sheriff not being present?" I said, and he nodded approval.

Well, every man to his liking. That is not a duty of office that I covet. Rather would I con the nut-brown ale, or enjoy the health-giving, open air life of a Bridgemaster.

V

ANNE BOLEYN'S LETTER

I STOOD the other day in the little chamber in the Lieutenant's Lodgings of The Tower of London, wherein Queen Anne Boleyn slept her last night on earth. That is the tradition it has, and with a place of such long and varied associations as The Tower, often there is nothing more material than tradition upon which to depend. A doubt is cast over it when one recalls that first cry of horror uttered by the unhappy Queen as she realized that she was shut into the grim fortress-prison. "Mr. Kingston, shall I go into a dungeon?" The old Constable of The Tower answered, "No, Madam, you shall go into your lodging, that you lay in at your Coronation."

That we have from a hand near his time, and because of it, often it has been assumed that Anne Boleyn's last days were spent in the old Royal Palace within The Tower. Those buildings Oliver Cromwell has the credit a century after of having destroyed, foreseeing no future use for

Royal Palaces for Kings. Chapuys, the Ambassador, has left on record that the Queen needlessly enhanced her grief and misery by looking out of her window upon the scene of the execution of the five gentlemen condemned with her. In that case the Royal apartments certainly cannot have been her "doleful prison." They stretched out beyond the Wakefield Tower, any view of Tower Hill being impossible.

It is for every reason unlikely that Henry VIII. would have committed to confinement in his own Royal chambers his dishonoured and discarded Queen, whom he seems to have pursued with inhuman enmity. Many things point to the use of the Lieutenant's Lodgings—"the King's House" of to-day. It was at that time the newest building in The Tower. There Kingston and his wife could sleep outside the Queen's door, as he says they did. It fits in with Chapuys' statement.

The yeoman warder attending as I sought the Queen's chamber made part of the picture of the house, for he wore the uniform of King Henry VIII., for whom was built this old mansion, red tiled and with its heavy oak timbers below the gables now exposed. "G.R." was embroidered upon the tunic—that was the only change. He led the way up two flights of stairs, then along a passage lighted by the windows

looking inwards upon the stone-paved space of Tower Green, which the ravens, striding away with long hops, make their undisturbed home. The key turned in the lock of the door, opening into a square room.

Fourteen feet it measures on every side, and there is dark-brown wainscoting of plain oak up to the low ceiling. The white ceiling can almost be touched by an upstretched hand; it is but 8 feet above the floor. This was the Queen's room. Outside the single casement window the rampart walls extended, the battlement being visible, and one realized that the wall fell sheer. The spell was upon the place. I thought it the most pathetic prison within The Tower. Others there are in plenty, where naked stone walls and narrow lights piercing a great thickness of masonry plainly tell their purpose; strongholds that have held doomed men till the time came when they should pass out to die.

The low window, the rampart without—it is Princess (Queen) Elizabeth's Walk, a raised way from the Beauchamp Tower to the Bell Tower—these seemed to invite escape. The yeoman warder recalled that always there would be an armed sentry patrolling. Besides, where should a prisoner escape from this height?

By the window is a fireplace. On the stone

above someone, centuries back, has scratched an inscription, too faint to-day to be decipherable, but there is what may be the word "Anna." The little room, without furniture, is kept as when Queen Anne Boleyn used it, nothing changed save that the squares of glass are set in a modern casement. A little room of sad memories. Instinctively one lowers the voice, speaking in it, paying them reverence. Here, if tradition does not belie, Anne Boleyn woke early in the dark of a May morning to hear Mass and prepare for the end. These four walls were the last she looked upon before she went down the stairs and out to the scaffold.

The Queen on May 2, 1536, was brought from Greenwich by water to The Tower, which was her prison till the 19th. A brief seventeen days witnessed the fall from her high estate, the arrest, trial, sentence, and execution, and on the morning after the bloody tragedy was committed Henry VIII. married Jane Seymour. It was a distracted woman who beyond the steps at Traitors' Gate was handed over to the Constable. "'Jesu have mercy on me!'" Anne Boleyn cried—"and then she kneeled down, weeping a great space, and in the same sorrow fell into a great laughing; and so she did several times afterwards." It is all very human. Sir William Kingston, too old a servant

of the Crown to question the King's justice, and much given to eavesdropping, seems to have treated the unhappy Queen with the greatest consideration. His wife, Lady Kingston, and the Queen's aunt, Lady Boleyn, were her personal attendants.

Little has transpired concerning those days spent within The Tower save her protestations of innocence and the women's conversation, laboriously reported to Cromwell. But there is a letter by Kingston himself to that same "Master Secretory," dated the day before the execution, which shows that harsh times and his hard task had not destroyed the humanity in him:

"At my commyng she sayd, 'Mr. Kyngston, I hear say that I shal not dye affore none, and I am very sory therfore; for I thowth to be dede by thys time, and past my payne.' I told hyr it shuld be now payne it was so sottel; and then she sayd, I have hard say the executioner was very gud, and I have a lyttel neck, and put her hand abowt it, lawyng hartely. I have sen many men and also wemen executed, and that they have been in grete sorrow; and to my knowlidge thys lady hasse meche joy and plesur in her dethe."

I glanced through the window, curious to see how far the view extended. Over the battlement and beyond the moat, looking west, the rise of Tower Hill, with all that gives it character to-day —all the distant tall warehouses—was spread out

below, though clear vision was obstructed by the leafless trees. The actual scaffold upon which the alleged participants with her in crime perished must, I think, have been mercifully sheltered from the Queen's anxious eyes, but the assembly of thousands of people in deep masses, the commotion—the little human ants, as they seem from this height and distance, going out to witness the death of their fellow ant—perhaps the noise rising to her quiet chamber, will have been sufficient indication that her despairing appeal to Henry to spare at least the lives of these had been as fruitless as had been the defence of her own good fame.

In this little room, one must believe, in such privacy as was allowed to her in her bed-chamber, Anne Boleyn wrote the famous and touching letter to King Henry VIII.—if, indeed, that letter was ever written. It is reproduced at length in facsimile here, and is well known. Four years after Queen Anne Boleyn met her destined fate, Cromwell, whose statecraft had sent so many men to the block, the stake, and the gibbet, himself passed to execution on Tower Hill; and on his papers being ransacked afterwards this letter was found among them. That has been the traditional story. The document bears the endorsement in three lines, now mutilated, "The

Ladye A—— to the Kinge H—— of The Tower," which has been represented to be in Cromwell's handwriting. Out of that material a legend has been woven, in years when history was much less scientific than it is to-day. The letter never came to Henry's knowledge. All correspondence passed to Cromwell, and he intercepted it.

Cromwell, one recalls, was among the company, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London being others, who at the King's request stood round the scaffold at Tower Green, whereon Anne Boleyn suffered. There is much that may justly be charged against Cromwell's memory. That he was hard and ruthless is unquestioned, but it is not necessary to load him with the infamy of possessing this piteous appeal from a Queen to a King—from a wife to a husband—and standing by while the headsman's sword flashed swift and true, doing nothing.

Whether Henry ever received the original or not none can tell. It is plain that the letter now in the national possession is not an original letter. It is in the Cottonian MSS. at the British Museum, accessible to all who call for it. The fire at the Cottonian Library in 1731, which did great destruction among the manuscripts, has burnt away parts at the edges, but full transcripts had been made. Froude, whose first impression was

strongly in favour of the letter's authenticity, afterwards became dubious. Dr. Gairdner, after long years of experience in handling Tudor documents among the State papers, declared it to be a manifest forgery. That may be so, but the clubbing method in history I do not care for. Why forged, and by whom, it is difficult to suggest; the only explanation at all plausible that can be made is that when Elizabeth succeeded to the Crown it was an effort on the part of someone to rehabilitate the good fame of her mother, and so curry favour, by producing a concocted letter.

Plainly the letter as we have it is a copy, and that it is quite honestly a copy, without pretension of being anything else, is evident from the appearance on the same sheet of a fragment of another letter from Anne Boleyn—a draft, it might seem. The document is written without a sign of emotion, in a good, clerkly hand, completed without a single correction save that a "not" is interlined, and in one sentence—"Let me receive an open trial"—the word "have" was first penned, and then crossed out for "receive," but that in the same line. A distraught woman would not have written so. I fancy the writing is Elizabethan. Nor does it appear that the endorsement has any real similarity to Cromwell's handwriting. The whole romantic story

seems to fall to the ground. We are in the presence of an historical mystery which may be insolvable, and, failing the production of an original holograph, can judge on the insecure basis of the contents alone.

The letter is remarkable. It reads true. That is, I think, the impression that everyone must receive on a first reading. Its honesty seems so transparent, the phrases move along in such natural order; it expresses, in words that are simple and unforced, just what one would expect in the circumstances to find expressed, so that, reading, one makes a mental picture of the anguished woman in her prison, writing it. To question its authenticity seems almost dishonourable, inhuman. Such is the power of words, and the spell which the pitiful story of Anne Boleyn has weaved about her. Authentic or not, the letter has passages that have become part of our literature, and I give it here, not pandering to the silly vanity that of course everyone knows it:

"SIR,

"Your Grace's displeasure and my imprisonment are things so strange unto me, as what to write, or what to excuse, I am altogether ignorant. Whereas you send unto me (willing me to confess a truth, and so to obtain your favour) by such an one whom you know to be mine antient professed enemy, I no sooner conceived this message by him, than I rightly conceived your meaning; and if, as you say, confessing a truth indeed may pro-

cure my safety, I shall with all willingness and duty perform your command.

"But let not your Grace ever imagine that your poor wife will ever be brought to acknowledge a fault where not so much as a thought ever proceeded. And to speak a truth, never a prince had wife more loyal in all duty, and in all true affection, than you have ever found in Anne Boleyn, with which name and place I could willingly have contented myself, if God and your Grace's pleasure had been so pleased. Neither did I at any time so far forget myself in my exaltation or received queenship, but that I always looked for such an alteration as now I find; for the ground of my preferment being on no surer foundation than your Grace's fancy, the least alteration was fit and sufficient (I knew) to draw that fancy to some other subject. You have chosen me from a low estate to be your queen and companion, far beyond my desert or desire. If then you found me worthy of such honour, good your Grace, let not any light fancy or bad counsel of mine enemies withdraw your princely favour from me; neither let that stain, that unworthy stain, of a disloyal heart towards your good Grace, ever cast so foul a blot on your most dutiful wife, and the infant princess, your daughter.

"Try me, good King, but let me have a lawful trial; and let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and my judges; yea, let me receive an open trial, for my truth shall fear no open shame. Then shall you see either mine innocency cleared, your suspicion and conscience satisfied, the ignominy and slander of the world stopped, or my guilt openly declared; so that, whatsoever God or you may determine of me, your Grace may be freed from an open censure; and mine offence being so lawfully proved, your Grace is at liberty, both before God and man, not only to execute worthy punishment on me, as an unlawful wife, but to follow your affection already settled on that party for whose sake I am now as I am, whose name I could some good while since have pointed

unto; your Grace not being ignorant of my suspicion therein.

"But if you have already determined of me, and that not only my death, but an infamous slander, must bring you the joying of your desired happiness; then I desire of God that he will pardon your great sin therein, and likewise mine enemies the instruments thereof; and that he will not call you to a strict account for your unprincely and cruel usage of me, at his general judgment seat, where both you and myself must shortly appear; and in whose just judgment, I doubt not, whatsoever the world may think of me, mine innocence shall be openly known and sufficiently cleared.

"My last and only request shall be, that myself may only bear the burden of your Grace's displeasure, and that it may not touch the innocent souls of those poor gentlemen who, as I understand, are likewise in strait imprisonment for my sake. If ever I have found favour in your sight, if ever the name of Anne Boleyn hath been pleasing in your ears, then let me obtain this request; and so I will leave to trouble your Grace any further; with mine earnest prayers to the Trinity, to have your Grace in his good keeping, and to direct you in all your actions. From my doleful prison in the Tower, the 6th of May. Your most loyal and ever faithful wife,

"ANNE BOLEYN."

Now read this a second and a third time, till the spell has gone, and there comes a cankering doubt, and that doubt grows. The date is important; it is four days after her arrival in The Tower. If this is the Queen's letter to Henry VIII., then it contains most things calculated to defeat its purpose—which was an appeal to have justice openly done to her. The reference to Jane

Photo by Mr. Richard Keene

ANNE BOLEYN'S LETTER TO KING HENRY VIII, reverse

Seymour, who to her knowledge here disclosed had already supplanted Anne Boleyn in the King's affections, could only rouse his furious resentment, and make his merciless determination immovable. If the letter is genuine, transferring the charge of unfaithfulness from herself to him, then the shaft was driven into the wound in which a man so jealous as Henry was most sensitive, and there rankling, it does much to explain the extraordinary vindictiveness of Henry towards his discarded Queen; the feasts and masques and entertainments in which he indulged while the death judgment against the imprisoned woman was still pending, his dressing all in white on the day of the execution, and the immediate marriage thereafter with Jane Seymour. High objects of State, despite Froude's tireless efforts, do not satisfactorily explain this last.

If the letter be genuine, I repeat, it contains most things calculated to defeat its purpose. If it is an invention of Elizabeth's reign, designed to rehabilitate in public esteem the tarnished memory of that great Queen's unhappy mother, then it contains most things calculated to achieve that purpose. It is quite uncannily skilful. Read as having that last purpose, with that object fixed in the reader's mind, then the bias is that it is a forgery.

Yet I have been told that, wise or unwise, that phrase indicating Anne Boleyn's rival is the strongest presumption of the letter's authenticity; that to write it, to drag in the wrong done to her, no matter at what cost, was a temptation that a woman wronged could not resist; that so far from establishing the worthlessness of the document, it is something near proof that Anne wrote it. She was not, like Cromwell, practised in the gift of statesmanlike concealment of emotions. "Hell knows no fury like a woman scorned!"

If intimate knowledge of feminine psychology be necessary to unravel this tangled riddle, then it does not necessarily follow that our most learned historians are the best judges. Only one who can penetrate a despairing woman's mind can say whether one so placed as was Anne Boleyn would write in these terms, throwing all caution to the winds of heaven. That gift I do not profess to possess. Every reader of this letter will form his or her own judgment. Any opinion I have myself formed little matters.

VI

AN OLD PRINTING HOUSE

MOSTLY you must seek in byways of the City for surviving houses of the great period of rebuilding after the Fire of London in 1666. Thousands then went up hastily; I have estimated their numbers elsewhere at nine thousand, making good that part of the devastation which the flames wrought, and thereafter there were the churches, St Paul's Cathedral, the Companies' halls and public buildings still to be raised, altogether costing millions. Our after-war housing schemes are gnats compared with what the Restoration citizens not only talked about but accomplished.

The Rebuilding Act after the Fire was insistent for future safety upon the use of brick and stone alone. Thereby it entirely transformed the appearance and character of the City, giving to it a uniformity it had never known when all the houses were framed in stout oak and beech, and rough plaster fronts and gables and steep red-tiled roofs were the mode, each builder following his

own bent. There is a little left of the City built after the Great Fire, seen by King Charles II. and by Mistress Nell Gwynne, but you need wide-open eyes to find it, for there is very little.

Look into Quality Court, mid-way up Chancery Lane, next time you are thereabouts for a surprise.

Cheapside is the exception to my general statement that you must search the byways. That historic thoroughfare has in No. 37 a house which I take to be the earliest left standing among those dating from the Great Fire. It is at the Friday Street corner, a red brick house, deep red, turning with age a little purple, like clotted blood. Still it bears, set into the front, one of the best of the London signs. It is the carved stone sign of the Chained Swan, a family crest, and why displayed here I do not know, except that it fits the house as well as any other. A modern tablet tells the passer-by that this old brick building was the only one in Cheapside that escaped the flames of 1666.

I don't believe it, for reasons that are amply adequate, but hold that this is more likely to be a house built just as London was beginning to rise out of its ruins, in the years 1667–8. An assurance I have had that during internal reconstruction in 1920 beams taken out bore evidence

of having been charred by flame does not move my disbelief.

Another of these Great Fire houses is Elkington's in Cheapside, No. 73, "the Old Mansion House," so-called from the tradition of its having been built for Sir William Turner, Lord Mayor in 1668–9. He leased for his Mayoralty Carpenters' Hall, standing near the City's northern wall, which had escaped the Fire. So I judge the house was not then ready. But many subsequent Lord Mayors are said to have kept their Mayoralty here in Cheapside before the Mansion House was built and made ready in 1753 for Sir Crisp Gascoyne, its first occupant.

Some builder's decorator (or someone with his taste) has concealed the original front beneath a mass of ornate stucco ornament—rubbish which I have prayed some gale might peal off into Cheapside, and disclose the honest brick beneath. It were fitting that the stuff should kill the decorator in its fall, only long years back in the course of nature his misspent life must have ended by less violent means. The house is shown stucco-covered in a print of nearly a century ago. It is undoubtedly authentic of the after-Fire period, and within there is a magnificent chestnut staircase, with heavy balusters and rail. Covetous Americans (good judges, too) have

offered bundles of dollars for that staircase. Honour to those good Englishmen and Londoners who, resisting temptation, have kept it for us.

Beyond these are the three tiny shops in Cheapside, welcome gifts from the past. Originally, till a street widening, they numbered four. They stand at the Wood Street corner, over which the famous plane-tree spreads its summer leaves and shadow, where Wordsworth heard a thrush singing—a picturesque corner familiar to all City men. The midgets were built together in the year 1687, as a tablet placed high on the rear wall tells, on parish ground of St Peter Chepe. They front the City's most important thoroughfare, and are so small—the smallest houses in all the City—because the site is but a few feet deep, each consisting of a single room above and a mere box of a shop below.

A red brick house, with the string course across it, which fills the back of Bow Churchyard, looking out on Cheapside, is contemporary with Wren's St Mary-le-Bow Church. It has a double floor of rooms, and I have envied the tenant, who values them, the occupancy of his sheltered, quiet City residence, eager to eject and replace him. But he shows a distressing robustness of life.

Many people think that the old houses of London's rebuilding after the Great Fire have gone.

Though a mere handful of all those built survives, I call to mind without effort places where bunches of them stand together, in Crane Court and Racquet Court, off Fleet Street, Quality Court in Chancery Lane, and Wardrobe Place, Doctors Commons. The Temple has large numbers of houses of the period; Inner Temple was almost completely burnt out in the Great Fire, and there was a second disastrous fire in the Temple in 1679. In King's Bench Walk, the Cloisters, Pump Court, Essex Court, New Court, Lamb Building and elsewhere you find them. Many bear dates over their decorated doorways. For an example of the great house, there is the Deanery of St Paul's. Two only, and those somewhat late, survive in Wardrobe Place, Doctors Commons, which till a destroyer came a few years ago was built about by these late seventeenth-century houses. It is still one of the most picturesque byways of the City, with trees bearing leaf in summer; a shaded, quiet close nestling by St Paul's.

A kindly *Athenæum* reviewer (of *Unknown London*) charged me with being discursive. Perish the thought that I should be anything else! But it is time to stride out towards the particular after-Fire printing house of which I am on this occasion the cicerone, not of such buildings in general. That house is in Crane Court and Red

Lion Court, two adjacent footways off Fleet Street, with its chief entrance and paved square upon the court named after the impossibly coloured lion. It is last in the row of houses in Crane Court, here shown by the photographer's skilful aid. The house in the forefront, No. 4, a fine example of the type—remarkably fine—has the date 1671 over the door, so fixes the period. The better aspect of the printing house is upon Red Lion Court. That side is represented in the drawing reproduced, by my old friend now dead, Mr Tom Way. Guess you will, very early on a visit, that this is not one house, but three. There you guess correctly, but the plan I do not profess to understand.

There was a fire in Crane Court not long ago—so recently as 1877. It gave us, in exchange for a house I would rather have seen preserved, the modern castellated building of the Scottish Corporation filling the head of the court, which I have always felt should have looked out upon a Scottish moor rather than upon this somewhat dingy passage. Nicholas Barbone, a great builder after the Fire of London, erected the original house, occupied after him by a son of that gifted physician, Sir Thomas Browne, of Norwich, author of the *Religio Medici*. Nick, if my genealogy does not go astray, was cousin once

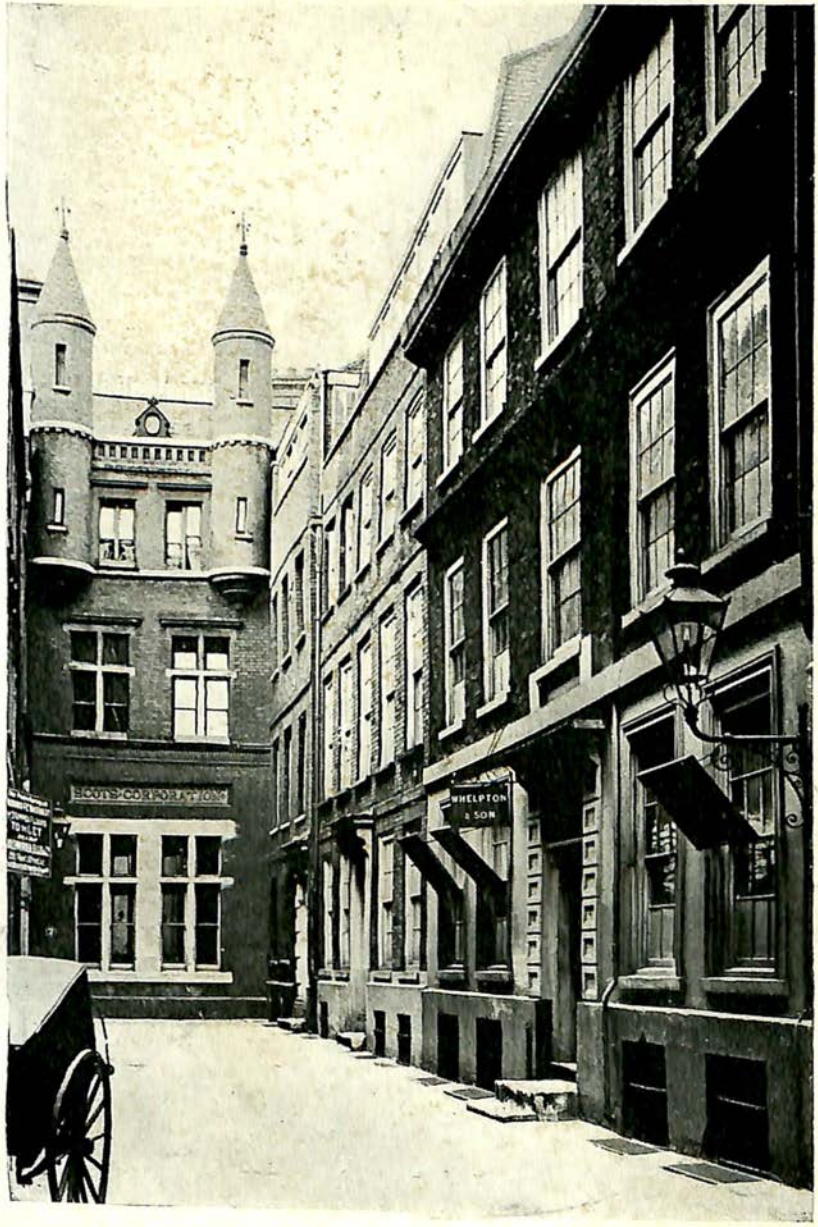


Photo by Mr. Alexander Anderson

CRANE COURT, FLEET STREET

removed of that well-named Puritan baptized "If-Christ-had-not-died-for-thee-thou-had-been-damned Barebone." Men called him for short "Damned Barebone"—that was inevitable.

The house destroyed by this Victorian fire had enjoyed full seventy years' immortal fame, for it became the headquarters of the Royal Society under Sir Isaac Newton's presidency. Each night when the Society was in session a light was shown at the entrance to the court from Fleet Street, to indicate that the lamp of philosophy burnt brightly above. There remains at the back in Newton Hall, sacred these later days to the Positivists, an old building in which maybe Newton's voice has been heard.

I have lingering a suspicion that the Crane Court angle of my printing house was in some way connected with the Royal Society's rooms—an annexe perhaps. Its ornamentation confers more distinction than would be expected in a small merchant's residence. The Red Lion Court house had obvious importance of its own.

For well-nigh a century Messrs Taylor and Francis, printers of scientific publications, have occupied the joint premises. Valpy, publisher of the *Delphin Classics*, was there before them. There is a little paved square over which you enter, still preserving a few of the original black

and white marble lozenges. One imagines it in late Stuart and William and Mary days with little bay-trees set about in green painted tubs, and people—substantial merchants were resident about Fleet Street then—sitting out in the sunshine that comes into the court, or enjoying the cool of a summer evening, after dinner partaken and the wine had gone round. The fine rooms, amply proportioned, with tall doors and walls panelling up to the decorated plaster ceilings, were surely made for hospitality.

There is a substantial length of the grand staircase remaining, stout and wide and solid. It turns to the landing on the first floor. Pity this is only a fragment, for it is characteristic of an age when builders had ideas of solidity, using oak for the twisted balusters and the massive rail, now browned with age and polish. With William and Mary mahogany came into use, and more fragile designs were favoured—men leant less heavily, perhaps, after the bottle. The same type of twisted baluster and rail is found on the stairs leading to the topmost floor of the incorporated house in Crane Court. But the real delight of the house is in its generously panelled rooms, and especially their ceilings.

Professor A. E. Richardson has described these last with an architect's insight, and gladly I

borrow (or, should he prefer the term, steal) this passage from him:

"On the first floor the fine rooms designed by Sir Christopher Wren, with geometrical panels in plaster enriching the ceilings, are preserved intact, and form a most charming suite. These ceilings are the work of a master hand, the plaster work being designed and modelled with a large, rich firmness, as though the designer and craftsman were experimenting with great gusto in congenial material, possibly as an exercise for a bigger enterprise. One of the ceilings has a large circular compartment with rounded, flowered moulding about 3 inches in depth, and the designs in the side compartments are varied in depth according to position, being thickest further from the windows. It must have been a rich forest of lights and shadows in the firelight, very appropriate to the old tenants in their plum-coloured coats and canary waistcoats and laced ruffles, and very pleasant for philosophers to raise their eyes to as they pondered over such wild new ideas as Newton's theory of gravitation. If this gravitation was all that it was cracked up to be (they may have thought) these heavily moulded plaster roses and leaves ought to have fallen on their noses. But the whole ceiling is to-day almost unbroken and as fine as ever, though it looks down

now on piles of old books and papers and the odds and ends of a publisher's store room."

Note the ascription to Sir Christopher Wren. He thinks this to be a Wren house. There we part company, myself with some diffidence—for I have not an architect's training. I am blind to much of the work attributed to Wren, to Grinling Gibbons, and to Chippendale (whose output must have been super-colossal if all were genuine), and in this case admit myself wholly unconvinced. When in a City church or a dealer's shop I am told that the wood carving is by Grinling Gibbons, I reply "Of course." It flatters the owners, as though the claim were too obviously genuine to be questioned, but really is non-committal. But if a link with Wren exists in this printing house, I have found it, not in the building itself (which might be anybody's), but in that particular large circular compartment of a plaster ceiling above alluded to. Why, allow me to explain.

Many people no doubt enter St Vedast Church in Foster Lane, crowned with that wonderful pierced steeple which to me has seemed amongst the finest of Wren's smaller works, without ever looking up to its ceiling. It is worth the glance up. It is enriched centrally with panels of foliage contained within one large oblong panel formed

THE CEILINGED ROOM IN RED LION COURT
From a drawing by Hanslip Fletcher

by bands of ornament, fruit and flowers, in unusually bold relief. This ceiling came to us somewhat curiously. In the seventeenth century the Tobacco Regie had a centre at Bideford, in Devon. Many Italian workmen were there employed, and some of them practised in spare hours the artistic craft of plaster-working which they had followed in their native country. Wren, chancing to see this work, thought their skill would be usefully engaged in making ornament for his churches, and brought the men to London. Now the design and craftsmanship of this circular plaster panel in the Red Lion Court and Crane Court printing house are so much like the greater work in the City Church of St Vedast that a common origin is likely, though how far Wren's hand is involved is necessarily problematical. Other ceilings in the house have seemed to me of later date.

Fine door-cases, a great deal of panelling, and valuable old furniture and fittings engage attention in the rooms, littered as they are with printing frames and type and innumerable papers. If having freedom to wander about, you come upstairs upon a little boxed-off compartment, now, I suppose, almost unique in London. It is the powder room. There the fine dame or beau of early Georgian times attended for the ministra-

tions of the coiffeur, who with a little sprinkler blew the white powder upon the wigs, making them resplendent for the day in the park or the evening's rout. The window, which has not been opened these many years, has the original little leaded panes of glass.

The joy of the old place, as often I have revisited it, is that it preserves into these days a printing house just as the printer Richardson, the father of the English novel, might have left it. In another such house, in Salisbury Court, across Fleet Street, Richardson wrote *Pamela*, and his presses produced those other books of interminable letters of love, craftiness and dejection which few honest men to-day (I am honest myself) can admit that they have read. Samuel Johnson and Richardson may have walked together up these same stairs. The old printer did not always trouble to take a shop. A dwelling house served all purposes of his trade. He placed his hand-presses on the ground floor, his cases of type were lodged on the floor above, and he himself lived in the upper apartments, with his apprentices *en famille;* they were his servants, and waited upon him and their mistress at table.

Steam and machinery have transformed the printing trade, but here is what I take to be the last printing house in the City of London that

has stood out against the innovation of machinery. Nothing that turns on axle and wheel has ever entered here. It keeps to the ancient ways. One shudders to think how completely the old character of the house would be changed were boilers and steam pipes, pulleys and belts to be obtruded into these comfortable rooms, and staircases be laid out on the factory model. In the press-room under the roof are the very oldest of the hand-presses, well oiled and kept, still printing—the Stanhope, the first lever press replacing the old screw press which had come down, but little changed, from Wynkyn de Worde, who introduced the art of printing into Fleet Street in the year 1501, the Northumberland press, the Albion and the Eagle. It is slow work that is done by them, the type being hand-inked, the lever pulled for each separate impression, and but one side of a paper sheet printed at a time—snail-like compared with the production of the steam-driven rotaries that with deafening noise dash off twenty thousand copies complete of a newspaper in a single hour. But it is good work. Much of the very finest printing in London is done at this house.

Nichols and Gough, the antiquaries, and also the "learned" Bowyer, were printers at one time established in Red Lion Court. The first printer

of eminence that I can positively trace to this particular house was Valpy, who came in 1822. That was eight years after the invention of the steam printing press. Valpy's sculptured sign, the Greek digamma, still stands fixed on the exterior wall. Valpy adopted it as his trade mark; it appears on the title-page of all his books; on his letter paper; indeed, his vanity in his beloved trade sign was so great that he placed it on his carriage! Valpy is best remembered by this generation as the originator and printer of the *Delphin Classics*. That huge undertaking consisted of a reprint, in no fewer than 144 volumes, of the great classic writers. All were set in type and printed in this house. I found the full collection, vellum bound, in a dealer's list the other day, and at £25 it was a cheap lot.

George Dyer was the chief labourer upon them, editing the whole series single handed. I like to picture him seated in august state, with busts of the great figures of antiquity about him, below the big circular panel of the plaster ceiling in that ample room already described; it has the atmosphere for a big endeavour—but this, of course, is all my fancy. The cellar and garret have been thought good enough for the scholar's labours. He lived in Clifford's Inn, near by. Charles Lamb, his most intimate friend, loved to poke fun at the

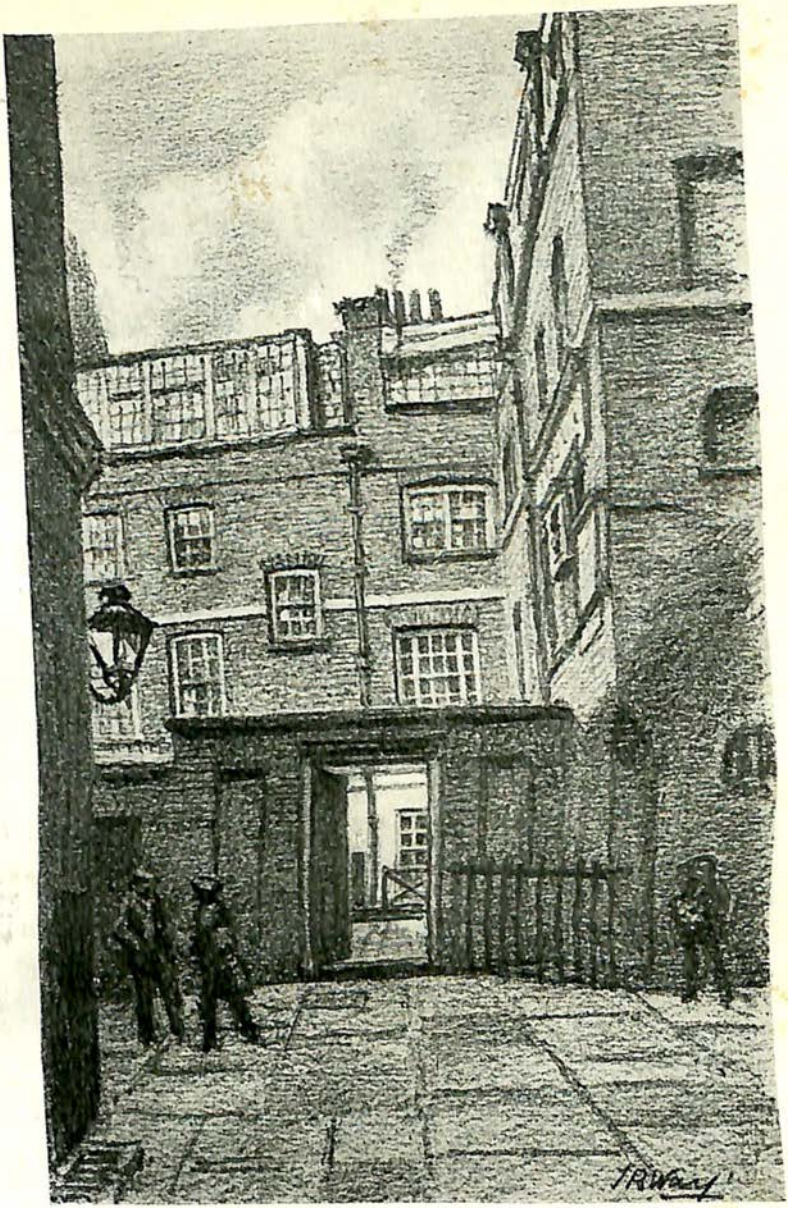
simple-minded and erudite old scholar. He was the *Amicus Redivivus* of that delightful Elia paper which relates how Dyer, on leaving Lamb's cottage at Islington with his head and thoughts in the air, fell into the New River, from which he was with difficulty fished up, wet through and shivering. On another occasion Dyer had been visiting Leigh Hunt, and a quarter of an hour after leaving he returned, saying that he believed he had left his shoe under the table. He had, in fact, walked nearly half a mile before he noticed the loss.

Dyer composed poetry in ten-syllable verse. "To G. D.," wrote Lamb, "a poem is a poem, his own as good as anybody's, and, God bless him! anybody's as good as his own; for I do not think he has the most distant guess of the possibility of one poem being better than another."

Valpy retired from the business in 1837, and then Richard Taylor came to Red Lion Court. The founder of the present firm of Taylor and Francis was a remarkable man, of great scientific gifts. He was under-secretary of the Linnean Society for nearly half a century, a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical and of the Philological Societies and of the Society of Antiquaries, and an original member of the British Association. The Francis of the partnership was Dr William Francis, also a man of considerable

scientific attainments, who entered the business in 1852. Together they gained a great reputation for careful printing, and produced many important works in natural history, as well as beautiful editions of the classics.

The *Delphin Classics* were not Valpy's only great enterprise at this house. He also printed there the *English Translation of Greek and Latin Classics* in fifty-two volumes. I suppose that even these vast productions have been eclipsed by Messrs Taylor and Francis, who have printed the Proceedings of many of the learned societies year by year—enough to stock dozens of bookcases. Scientific printing is the special feature of the firm's work, and there are no forms used in the most abstruse mathematical calculations, or words in almost any language, living or dead, for which they could not at once provide the necessary type. The present head of the firm is my good friend Mr R. T. Francis, the younger son of the late Dr William Francis, who died in 1904. He has suffered me with much forbearance when I have brought delighted parties of antiquaries to roam about his printing house.



PRINTING HOUSE IN RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET
From a drawing by T. R. Way

VII

CRIES OF OLD LONDON

GIVE credit for this paper, whatever may be due, to Sir Frederick Bridge, and none to myself. I knew many of the London street cries; his merit is that he has found them all. Of course, I do not limit his merit to that. I have sat in Abbey and concert-room, and have heard from Sir Frederick Bridge delightful music.

But this particular piece of antiquarian work was no mean accomplishment. His quest was music. Did you ever survey the big music catalogue of the British Museum Library? I shudder when I see its interminable volumes, and thank a kindly Fate that that, at least, I may pass by. I, too, have delved deeply, but that stratum have I left alone.

Sir Frederick is no coward. I picture him approaching the desk, and without a tremor calling for Orlando Gibbons, Weelkes and Deering.

Of course, it was open to anybody, possessing nerve, to dare as much. But how many had the

knowledge of Sir Frederick Bridge as to where the old London street cries could be found? It is passing strange that while antiquaries were from a hundred sources piecing together as much as we had known of them, they should have been lying all together in the British Museum Library. That cave of Ali Baba has held them in its mysterious depths these many years, inheriting the manuscripts, for Gibbons, Weelkes and Deering were all contemporaries of Shakespeare.

A happy thought first came to Weelkes to use the London cries as vocal parts to a "fancy" for viols. Let me explain that the fancy (Sir Frederick is authority, enlightening my musical ignorance) was an old and early form of instrumental chamber music, and the association of the vocal parts with this form was a new experiment. Certainly the cries cannot have seemed material of a promising libretto. But they were always in the streets, ready at hand for anyone to utilize at will.

Orlando Gibbons appropriated the idea. There was no copyright. After him came Deering, one supplementing the other; and that we have today, not the words alone, but the actual notes that resounded from the criers about the metropolis, is plain from the fact that all three composers give the tunes alike.

I should need Miss Coral Peachey and the Philomel Singers, with Mr Stanley Roper and Mr Graham Smart, to interpret the music, as delighted I have heard them, but the written cries shall interpret themselves. It is a whole day that Orlando Gibbons—and he is the fullest—gives us of that Elizabethan and earliest Stuart London about which he walked, with ears and eyes observant. This same London of ours, only its surface features much differed. The City is to-day but a little embedded area, the centre of the great blob that the dense metropolis makes on the map. The City was London in Queen Elizabeth's and King James's time.

Let us just peep into it, as it stood when the cries were shouted. A small City, and, too, a walled City, wall and river encircling the habitations. Across the Thames, on Bankside in Southwark, were the playhouses and the bear-baiting ring, much frequented.

London streets were narrow. Rough, egg-shaped cobble stones made a paving, which stretched from house to house. There were no separate footways. The houses were timber framed and built, the walls filled in with laths bearing a coating of rough plaster, the flat face strewn with adhering sand or gravel. Here and there some important merchant's mansion or

travellers' inn had its ground story only of brick. The poor lived in mere wooden hovels, weather-boarded and smeared with pitch, and often in cellars. An open kennel ran down the centre or side of each street, out on which poured the rain from the roofs, and with it much refuse thrown from the houses was carried along towards the stinking town ditch and the river.

The houses of Elizabethan London were dark and low. That the walled City was picturesque in the mass I never doubt. Not being ourselves condemned to live in it, there is no need to bother about its ugly side—its high mortality from Plague, scattered from every point where people congregated, its horrible insanitation, well water often filtered through graveyards, and general unwholesomeness. The race must have been strong to have endured.

London rose early about its work and went early to bed, the City gates closing against horse and wheeled traffic at sunset. The wickets closed at dark, when all ale-houses shut their doors. Out of the still night you might have heard the cry, "God give you good morrow, my masters, past three o'clocke and a fair morning." That was the watchman's hail; he swings his horn lantern as he stamps along. It is a summons back three and a half centuries, and I propose to be up

betimes with Gibbons, making the round of the streets with him as he goes about collecting the cries.

The eastward sky lightens, pointing the City gables. The first sun-rays come aslant the high wall and the grey fortress Tower, giving a warm glow to the red-tiled roofs. Already the fish-wives are astir, gossip done and business at hand. "New plaice. New mackerell, new haddock. New thornback, new great lamprils. New fresh herrings"—from one or another come the various cries. "New mussels, my lilly-white mussels. New cockles, new great cockles. New sprats, new sprats new." They use "new" with the meaning of "fresh"—a great consideration when means of transit are slow and fish perishes.

"Hot codlings" are on offer in the fresh morning. "Will you buy any milk to-day, mistress? I have fresh cheese and creame, I 'ha' fresh," calls another. "Milk, maids below," was a later variant of the cry. It became "Milk below," and then the familiar "Milk-o!" still with us.

About six o'clock, or earlier in summer, the apprentices with a clatter bring down the shutters, and stand at the shop doors, calling.*

* It was a learned Bachelor of Divinity, one Alexander Gell, who was sentenced to lose his ears and be degraded from the ministry, for giving his opinion of King

Their cries last with little intermission throughout the day. Listen where the haberdashers crowd about Paternoster Row. "What is't ye lacke, ladies? Fine bone lace or edgeings, sweet gloves, silke garters, fine combes or glasses, or a poking stick with a silver handle?" "Will ye buy any starch or cleere complexion, Mistris?" Woman's vanity is old as the human race; it is only fashion which changes. Others make appeal to the passer-by, male and female indifferently. "Fine wrought shirts or smocks. Here's perfumed waistcoats."

Produce comes in from the country fields and gardens, and is shouted about the City. "Whyte cabidge, whyte young cabidge. Whyte turneps, whyte young turneps. Whyte parsnep, whyte young parsneps. Whyte lettice, whyte young lettice. Whyte radish, whyte young radish." The criers have small invention. There is more variety about the fruit-sellers. "Cherry ripe, ac' a black, apples fine, medlars fine, pippins fine." "Hard St Thomas's onions. Fine Seville oranges, fine lemons." "Ripe strawberry, ripe."

Close by Moorgate is a barred, prison-like

Charles I., that he was fitter to stand at a Cheapside shop with an apron before him, and say "What lack ye?" than to govern a kingdom (Ellis's *Original Letters*, iii. 276).

building. The madmen, poor helpless creatures, are at their begging grate—

"Poore naked Bedlam, Tom's a-cold!
A small cut of thy bacon or a piece of thy sowe's side, good Besse.
God Almighty blesse thy witts!"

"Bless thy five wits!—Tom's a-cold." Shakespeare uses the words, and often must have heard the cry as he passed, said to this same refrain that Sir Frederick Bridge has resurrected. Till sundown that plaintive appeal goes on.

The street vendors are out, crying "Quick, periwinckles, quick, quick, quick!" Who could resist that call? "Ripe chessnuts, ripe walnuts, ripe small nuts." "Rosemary and bays, quick and gentle." "Oysters, threepence a peck at Bridewell Docke, new oysters, new Walfleet oysters. New cockles, new great cockles." Many have taken up their stands with hot viands, always welcome in the draughty houses, where wood fires burn at the hearths. "Hott apple pyes, hott pudding pyes, hott pippin pyes, hott mutton pyes"—there is full selection to be made. "I have ripe peascods, fine potatoes fine," says one. "I have ripe gooseberries," says another. Sweeps, man and boy, black as devil's imps, move among the people, and their musical cry rings amid the houses—

"Swepe, chimney-swepe! Swepe, chimney-swepe!
Swepe, chimney-swepe! Mistris, swepe!
With a hey, dery, dery, dery, swepe!
From the bottom to the top, chimney swepe!
Then shall no soote fall in your poridge-pot!
With a h-oop, dery, dery,
Sw-e-e-pe!"

That is fine, but to give the surge of the "hey, dery, dery, dery swepe!" and full lilt of the lines I should need the musical notation.

Itinerant vendors are ready to tempt the thrifty housewife with barter. "Broome for old shoes or pouch rings, boots or buskins for new broome," cries one. "Old bottles, old shoes, pouch rings for broomes." Others set their lure for the kitchen maids. "Coneyskins have ye, maydes? Ha' ye any kitchen stuff, maydes?" There is the ink-seller, his little barrel and measure and funnel swung at his side, and with good goose-quill pens in hand, chanting almost a little song. "Very fine writing ink, very fine, bright ink. Buy any ink, will you buy any ink?" The street market is ubiquitous, for there is hardly an article of utility that is not on offer, and has not its distinct cry.

"A good sausage, and it be roasted, goe round about the capon, goe round!"

"Will ye buy a matt for a bed?"

"Ripe damsons, fine ripe damsons! Hard garlicke hard!"

"Will ye buy any Aqua Vitæ, Mistris?"

"Buy a barrel of Samphire?"

"Old doublets, ha' ye any old doublets?"

"Buy a fine washing ball!"

I have mixed the cries together, careless of seasons. Sometimes there is snow over London. The roofs are white, the red tiles showing only where the warmth of the chimneys has thawed the fall. Little fresh vegetables are then on offer, and less meat; the gudewife being largely dependent upon her salted pickle tub for the winter's supply. "Hott oat cakes" are cried. "Buy a new almanak?"—it is a reminder that another year has come round. Old and young people gather about the Common Crier in the street to hear his message. It is delivered in this wise—

"Oyez! If any man or woman can tell any tydyngs of a gray mare, with a long mane and a short tayle. She halts downe right before, and is starke lame behind, and was lost this thirtieth day of February. He that can tell any tydyngs of her let him come to the Cryer and he shall have well for his hier."

The City harbours all sorts of handy men, willing to do any odd job in the houses. "Have you any wood to cleave?" "Have ye any olde bellowes or trayes to mend?" Hard manual labour is given to earn the penny. "Ha' ye any work for a cooper?" "Have you any work

for a tinker?" The vendor of "small cole" offers his fuel from the sack borne on his back. It is very costly, and is brought by sea, hence the common name of "sea-cole." "Ha' ye any corns on your feet or toes?" is the demand of another, ready for a small fee to extirpate them with his scalpel. A dentist goes round, holding his forceps aloft, and promising his victims painless extraction.

Then comes another barterer, droning his singsong; I suspect a Scottish strain in him, there is such economy of idea, such reiteration about his lines—

"Have you any boots, mayds,
Or have you any shoone?
Or an old payre of buskins?
Will you buy any broome?
An old payre of boots, mayds,
Or a new payre of shoone,
Or an old payre of buskins,
For all my greene broome."

So the cries go on, greeting the ear at every street corner of this narrow, noisy, stuffy old town. "I ha' ripe cowcumbers, ripe," calls one. "Salt, fyne whyte salt. Will ye buy my dish of eels? What ends have ye of gold or silver? Hot spic'd cake. Will ye buy any straw?"—this last from a countryman. "Will ye buy any milke or frumenty?" And amid the bustle and the life

and the laughter there is always the pathos of the prisons, not hidden in some concealed corner, but at the City gates. Newgate and Ludgate are the chief of them—in the last the debtors lie—and the Sheriffs also have their "compters." Their inmates are so little thought of that they have not even food supplied without begging for it—

"Good, gratious people, for the Lord's sake pity the poor women! We lie cold and comfortless night and day on the cold boards in the deep, dark dungeon."

As poignant even as this is the monotonous cry that comes from the Marshalsea begging grate—

"Bread and meate for a prisoner of the Marshalsay,
For Christ Jesus' sake!"

We know the London street scene and the cries a couple of centuries before Gibbons—five centuries ago. Wonderfully London has kept its history. John Lydgate died when Henry VI. ruled England, a man of seventy—old as years were then counted, extremely old. And in his middle period he wrote his *London Lackpenny*, telling of the adventures of a countryman who came out of Kent to get justice at Westminster, but for lack of money could not speed. Disgusted with law, he turned to our fair City.

"Then unto London I dyd me hye,
Of all the land it beareth the pryse;

'Hot pescods!' one began to cry;
'Strabery ripe and Cherryes in the ryse!'
One bad me come nere and by some spyce;
Peper and safforne they gan me bede—
But, for lack of mony, I myght not spede."

In Cheapside, till the goldsmiths came there as the predominant traders, were stalls and shops at which Simon and his good wife replenished their finery—

"Then to the Chepe I gan me drawne
Where much people I saw for to stand;
One ofred me velvet, sylke, and lawne;
Another he taketh me by the hande,
'Here is Parys thred, the fynest in the land!'

"Then went I forth by London Stone,
Throughout all the Canwyke Streete:
Drapers much cloth me offred anone;
Then met I one cryed 'Hot shepe's feete!'
One cryde 'Makerell'; 'ryshes grene!' another gan greete."

A song in the streets of some old romance, or a popular jingle, so early tempted from the townsman's pouch the small copper coin, or drew from the pleased housewife a contribution in kind towards the day's meal—

"Then I hyed me into Est-Chepe,
One cryes 'Rybs of befe, and many a pye!'
Pewter pottes they clattered on a heape;
There was harpe, pype and mynstralsye;
'Yea, by cock! Nay, by cock!' some began cry;
Some songe of Jenkin and Julyan for their mede—
But, for lack of mony, I myght not spede."

Old as were these cries that Lydgate has preserved for us, ringing through London streets in the fifteenth century, they are much akin to those later. The cries, passed on from one generation to another, were amongst the most ancient of London's traditions. Sam Johnson, a Londoner after my liking, wrote in the *Adventurer*: "The attention of a new-comer is generally first struck by the multiplicity of the cries that stun him in the streets."

No, I do not agree that London was ever a quiet City. It was noisy always, just the same when the iron-shod cart wheels rumbled over the egg-shaped cobbles as now, with each day's continuous roar of motor traffic. I love all the noise of its ceaseless activities. Like James Russell Lowell, I can feel that in London I am listening to the roaring loom of Time. It has immense variety; it can even be quiet. Often I steal across the City after midnight, when the last of the moving traffic has found shelter, and the big palace-like blocks of office buildings seem to have grown larger and yet more forbidding in the dimness of their outline and in the solitude. Away from the few main thoroughfares, I am in a city of the dead. I get down to the river, where the moon lightens the wharves and there is no stir among the shipping, but immense activities are locked

in sleep, and then I realize as few save the old, dead habitants of this City have done how much London belongs to the Thames.

For two hours at most London streets are deserted—certainly not for more. The late to bed have hardly departed before the market-men, the first to throw out a hail to the stranger, are starting a new day. He knows London indifferently who does not know its twenty-four hours' round.

I am old-fashioned enough to believe that I should have preferred those street cries heard by Deering and Gibbons and Weelkes to the motor-horns and shrill taxi-whistles that assail our ears to-day. They at least were human, not mechanical. But perhaps I am wrong, deceived by a false glamour we weave about times past. A century hence no doubt some other writer will be telling of an "Unknown London," and in his new chapter on the sounds of the metropolis will re-create in fancy the music of those motor-horns, the cheery call of cab whistles, that so enlivened the streets in 1921, comparing them to the great disparagement of the clatter of aerial engines and the dull, incessant buzz of propellers overhead that night and day rack the nerves of his own generation.

But that is a step forward, and I have not

finished my day with Orlando Gibbons. Last scene of all is as the watchmen come creeping about the streets again, enlivening them with their cry as the dusk falls, "Lanthorns and candle-light hang out, mayds, for all night." There is the day's last cry as midnight strikes—

"Twelve o'clocke,
Looke well to your locke,
Your fier and your light,
And so good-night."

Better still do I like the earlier admonition, inviting sleep—

"List good people all
Past ten o'clocke, the houre I call.
Now say your prayers, and take your rest
With conscience clear and sins confess'd.
I bid you all good-night!
Good-night!"

Imagine that from Robert, X 239! Life in London has indeed lost the picturesqueness of a bygone day.

VIII

ST MARTIN-LE-GRAND

I REPUDIATE altogether a popular belief that the best place from which to see the City is the top of an omnibus. That way you miss nearly everything of value in that treasure centre of abiding interest, familiarizing yourself only with streets of tall buildings hurrying past which mean nothing, and people darting hither and thither who seem entirely unconcerned in their surroundings—as no doubt they are. But a single exception I allow, and it is St Martin-le-Grand.

For this good reason. A tall wooden paling encloses the spot on every side, and only when raised to the top of a passing omnibus can you look over. It is not much that rewards (the accompanying photograph shows all)—only the view of a big stretch of ground, laid open to the depth of some 20 feet below the street level and scarred with pit-holes, with a few wild plants that found rooting in the earth during the war

Photo by Mr. Geoffrey Gowing

ROMAN PIT-HOLES AT ST. MARTIN-LE-GRAND

years, when men were too preoccupied to disturb them with building.

This is a bit of Roman London, earth, touched with the sun rays, that has again awakened to life after burial for centuries, and these are Roman pit-holes. Archæologists have cleared and explored them for any treasure they may have contained, but the search has proved uneventful. Many fragments of pottery have been recovered, a few with lettering or ornament but without importance, some household utensils and bones. That Roman citizens partook of animal food at meals eaten here, as elsewhere, nearly two thousand years ago does not materially enlarge our conceptions of Roman London, concerning which we still know little. A statuette of Hadrian, the pavement mosaic of a noble's mansion, or a find of coins—these far better would have repaid research. After all, exploration by future ages of our own dust-bins would rarely produce, say, an aeroplane, or a submarine depth charge, or the Einstein theory.

Roman and Saxon and Norman, mediæval, Tudor, Victorian—few spots in the City are so crowded with associations as this much scarified ground, left fallow so many years while awaiting the builder. The Empire's central Post Office is what the name recalls, as it was till yesterday, but

to our ancestors St Martin-le-Grand has meant much more than this: a sanctuary for evil-doers lasting throughout five centuries, a college of priests, the Curfew, and the flames of London's Great Fire.

Ingelric, a priest, and Girard, his brother, built here, or more likely rebuilt, a church dedicated to St Martin, of stout logs, as I look back upon it. That was ten years before the Norman Conquest. Its unique place in later mediæval London was that it gave the Curfew to the City. At the first deep note of warning from St Martin's the ringers in other church belfries stood ready; St Laurence for the Thames-side, Barking Church for The Tower. Then together they rang out the Curfew. St Bride's gave the message to the western suburb. *Couvre le feu.* All lights went out. Taverns for ale and wines shut their doors. Ludgate, Bishopsgate, Aldgate and all others of the City gates were locked and guards posted. The City was enclosed within itself, left to darkness, its streets in utter solitude, strangely quiet, till the first rays of the morning sun shot aslant the high guarding wall, and life was again astir.

"No person shall be so daring," says the proclamation of Mayor Reynold le Conduit (A.D. 1334), "on pain of imprisonment, as to go wandering about the City after the hour of curfew

rung out at St Martin-le-Grand, unless it be some man of the City of good repute, or his servant, and that with reasonable cause, and with light."

Ingelric, a noble Saxon, had held some office under Edward the Confessor, and that St Martin's in Saxon London stood high in repute is evident from its possessions. Piously, as King William tells, "for the remission of my own sins," the Conqueror granted his charter to the brothers in the second year of his reign. I like this document and its great picture, its meekly supplicant preamble—

"Forasmuch as among the many good works which the faithful of Christ perform for the health of their souls, that chiefly is esteemed and considered, which is designed by a devout mind for the institution and building of a holy mother church, in which the servants of God, through their prayers, are absolved of their sins by a bountiful God; which Moses, by the construction of the mystical tabernacle, has foreshown; which also was prefigured by the industry of Solomon, when he was building a costly temple to the Lord, signifying that the future Church ought to be adorned with the highest honour by the faithful; by the example of whom and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I William, by the disposal of God and inheritance of consanguinity, King of England, Duke and Ruler of Normandy," etc., etc.;

its damnatory clause—

"Now if any one shall presume to transfer to another purpose this which we have granted, may he suffer God's punishment for heretics with Judas the traitor;"

and the signatures crowding with majesty upon the parchment—

"I William King of the Angles and Duke of the Normans, under the seal of Holy Cross, have irrevocably consented and confirmed; I Matilda the Queen have given my consent; I Robert, the son of the King, have assented; I Stigand Archbishop have confirmed; I William Bishop of London, within the walls of which the aforesaid Monastery is situate, have underlined it with the mark of the Holy Cross, and have granted it all sort of liberty as much as to my power can pertain; I Odo Bishop of Bayeux have consented; I John Cardinal, Priest of the Holy Church of Rome throughout Wales and England, bearing the Apostolic office, Pope Alexander consenting, was present at this constitution and have confirmed, as much as pertains to the Apostolic See, liberty to this church by the present mark; I Peter also Cardinal, Priest and Chancellor, delegated from the said Pope to England, acquiescing to this constitution, have subscribed with my own hand; I Leofric the Bishop have granted; I Waldeof the Earl; I William Malet the Chief; I Arfast Chancellor of the King"

and abbots, chaplains, and many dignitaries in train. There is spaciousness and something of feudal grandeur even in the verbosity of the instrument.

The Conqueror liked so well the brothers Ingelric and Girard that to the college of secular canons they founded about their church he gave unusual privileges. He confirmed them in possession of their broad lands in Essex and elsewhere, and to these added of his Royal gift certain

land and moor outside London Wall at Cripplegate. They should elect from among the brethren an able Procurator and Keeper of their affairs. They had meadow, pasture, and water. They had soc and sac, tol and team, infangentheof, blodwyte, mundbrice, uthleape, fyrdwite, hamsokne—yes, and miskenninge, too. I was on the point of overlooking that.

What more need be said? Broad based upon these generous gifts, there grew up at St Martin-le-Grand a college of priests, unrenowned either for learning or piety, and so I am little concerned with it, and what is more to the purpose, the famous sanctuary. That was a most extraordinary condition of things for even a mediæval age to have tolerated in the heart of the City. Sanctuary, in its simplest form, appertained to all churches. It ensured the wrong-doer at least safety for his life should he choose to abandon the realm, and forty days within which, unmolested, he might consider the risks of leaving the church of his refuge and submitting to the law. Forty days, then trial or else outlawry and banishment —that was his choice, the sanctuary given to him. In its origin, sanctuary was not unworthy. It was a gift of charity and mercy, designed as a loophole of escape from the harsh severity of the penal laws, and none who knows those harsh laws

can doubt the necessity of some mitigation. But of sanctuary in its abuse no good can be said.

St Martin-le-Grand was a chartered sanctuary, its liberties protected by Papal anathema and royal charter. It was a resort wherein murderers, thieves, felons generally and false debtors might and did take refuge, and there lived out their unworthy lives, safe under the protecting ægis of the Church. Other sanctuaries refused their protection for certain crimes committed—such, for instance, as robbery of the Church. St Martin-le-Grand, in its wider tolerance, did not boggle at sacrilege. One Henry Kneve took sanctuary in 1416, bringing therein a signet ring and a pyx for the Reserved Sacrament that he had stolen, together with certain coins and other valuables, and these he deposited with another dweller in the precinct of St Martin's. This delinquent afterwards fled the sanctuary. Thereupon the Dean's officers seized the stolen property as a waif within the franchise of the Church.

St Martin-le-Grand, like Westminster, to which near the end of its salicious life it became attached, existed as a free Royal Chapel, acknowledging Pope and King, but released from all other supervision, ecclesiastical or civil. Neither Archbishop nor Bishop had authority in the precinct, nor had London's Mayor. Kings did not hesitate

to profit by the scandal, using the offices of the deanery and prebends as well-paid places for the preferment of the least scrupulous of their own clerical followers. For the larger part, the Canons of St Martin's were non-resident, and the discipline maintained was notoriously effete. In the sanctuary Miles Forest, one of the murderers of the Little Princes in The Tower, "rotted away piecemeal," as Sir Thomas More says.

The Duke of Buckingham's speech at the Council board, when the faithless Gloucester desired the removal of the young Princes from sanctuary at Westminster, affords a striking picture of the state of sanctuaries at that period. I retain the old spelling of John Stow:

"Yet I will not saie naie, but that it is a deede of pitie, that such men as the sea or their evill debtours have brought in povertie, should have some place of libertie, to keepe their bodies out of the daunger of their cruell creditours. And also, if the crowne happen (as it hath done) to come in question, while either part taketh other as traytors, I will well there be some places of refuge for both.

"But as for theeves, of which these places bee full, and which never falle from the crafte after they once fall thereto, it is pitie the sanctuarie should serve them; and much more man-quellers, whom God bad to take from the altar and kill them if their murther were wilfull: and where it is otherwise there neede we not the sanctuaries that God appointed in the olde lawe. For if either necessitie, his own defence, or missfortune draweth him to that deede, a pardon serveth, which either the

lawe graunteth of course, or the King of pitie may. Then looke we now, how few sanctuarie-men there be, whom anie honourable necessite compelled to go thither; and then see on the other side what a sort ther be commonly therin of them whom wilful unthriftiness hath brought to naught.

"What a rable of theeves, murtherers and malitious heynous traytors, and that in two places specially. The one at the elbowe of the citie [Westminster] the tother in the verie bowels [St Martin's]. I dare well avowe it, weye the good that they do with the hurt that commeth of them, and ye shall find it much better to lacke both than to have both. And this I saie, although they were not abused as they now bee, and so long have been, that I fear me ever they will be, while men be afraid to set their handes to the mendment, as though God and St Peter were the patrons of ungratious living.

"Now unthriftes riot, and run in debt, upon the boldnes of these places; yea, and riche men runne thither with poore men's goods, there they builde, there they spend, and bid their creditours go whistle them. Men's wives run thither with their husbands' plate, and say they dare not abide their husbands for beating. Theeves bring thither ther stolen goods, and there live thereon. Ther devise they newe robberies; nightlie they steele out, they robbe, and reeve, and kill, and come in againe; as though those places gave them not onelie a safegard for the harm they have done, but a licence also to do more."

Let us credit King Richard II. in an earlier age with more light than his contemporaries, when he roundly condemned St Martin-le-Grand as "a nest of iniquity."

London citizens were the chief sufferers from

this resort of all evil, ensconced in their midst under charter. For although within the City walls, St Martin's was a liberty in itself. There were places geographically within the old City of London that claimed to be outside the Lord Mayor's jurisdiction; the lawyer's inns have never admitted the mayoral jurisdiction. St Martin's successfully resisted all efforts at interference by the City fathers. The citizens' merchandise underwent constant plundering by its refugees. They petitioned King Henry IV. in Parliament in the year 1403, setting out "that murderers, traitors, robbers, money-clippers and other felons, malefactors and rioters" at St Martin-le-Grand made disturbance within the City by day, and issued forth by night to commit outrages, after which they again betook themselves to the sanctuary. False merchants and debtors were in the habit of taking refuge in St. Martin's, and lived there unmolested upon the goods they carried with them in their flight. Apprentices and others went as fugitives with their masters' goods. The citizens represented their own sorry case, property so stolen and dealt with not being recoverable by secular law. They prayed for redress—apparently with no other result than an empty promise that the charges should be investigated.

Not long after this date the citizens took matters into their own hands.

The story curiously illustrates mediæval ways. On September 1, 1444, a civil prisoner (a soldier named Knight) was being conducted from Newgate to Guildhall. His comrades had arranged a deep laid plot. One had summoned him on a pretended action for debt before the Sheriff, well knowing that he would be led past St Martin's gate. When there, five other soldiers dashed out of Panyer's Alley—the little passage to Paternoster Row which still bears, set in the wall of a corner house, the stone effigy of a boy with his panier, or basket, placed there after the Great Fire, with the inscription—

> "When ye have sought the Citty round,
> Yet still this is the highest ground."

They took the prisoner from his gaolers, and rushed him into the sanctuary. The Sheriffs, the Alderman of the ward and the City Chamberlain, coming with an armed posse and a multitude of people, demanded that the man and his rescuers should be given up to them. Failing to obtain compliance with this demand, they broke into the sanctuary and forcibly seized all six. The astonished Canons of St Martin's sent post haste by horsed messenger to the Dean at Cambridge

a letter " wrytten at London, with heavie harte." They reported this violent infraction of their privileges, saying that the prisoners were led from their gate through Cheapside to Newgate, " all naked save there lynnen cloyes, two togethere, chayned by the necke and manacled as traytours, afore your gate, as in despite of your Sanctuarie, and as we be enformed be lyke to be deade in all hast." Also they reported grave distress and alarm among the remaining sanctuary men, " your tenants here beinge dreden sore lest they be fecht out with force in the same wise."

Richard Cawdray, the Dean, went at once to the King, laying complaint. Henry VI. referred the issue to the " Lords of his counsail and bloode, in the Sterred chamber "—in short, made a Star Chamber matter of it. There it was fought out at great length, with this result: The privilege enjoyed by St Martin's was upheld, the prisoners were restored there, and fines were imposed on the Sheriffs for disobedience to the King's writ, which, upon the Dean's protest, had peremptorily required the restoration of the men. The Dean, a man worldly wise, had clinched his other arguments by reminder that the City governors had good reason to support the liberties of his church, for many worshipful members of the Corporation

had, for debt or other trespass, received the shelter of its privileges. That was a nasty remark!

The saintly William of Wykeham stands out as the shining (and rare) example of St Martin's piety; but Cawdray I like best, for in him was incarnated the Church militant—a Dean with grasp of affairs, who knew how to uphold his rights, bad as they might be. No King ever cowed him. When Henry VI. sent his officers to St Martin's to claim for treason William Cayme, one of Jack Cade's rebels, Cawdray himself locked the fugitive in the sanctuary prison, then collected his Papal Bulls, charters and muniments, "as well under lede as wax," and with them hurried off to the Royal palace. There he convinced the devout monarch that, powerful as were Kings, their autocracy stopped at the Dean of St Martin's door.

A greater triumph than this Cawdray enjoyed. The Earls of Salisbury, Wiltshire and Worcester, the Barons de Lisle and de Moleyns, Mathew Philip, Sheriff of London, and the Alderman of his ward he held on one occasion in his power. A Speaker of the House of Commons was cause of the trouble, Sir William Oldhall, who had been outlawed in the vexed times which preceded the Wars of the Roses. He had fled to St Martin's for sanctuary. It was charged—falsely, with small

doubt—that Oldhall, making sortie with other sanctuary men in one of their lawless raids, had some part in dangerously wounding Walter Burgh, a Royal officer, in the adjacent streets. The three Earls and others mentioned burst open St. Martin's gate at midnight, found Oldhall concealed in the church, and raising him bound on horseback, carried him off to Westminster. Thereby violating sanctuary, they were *ipso facto* excommunicate. Full confession and reparation to God and St Martin by gifts of huge tapers of wax, gold, jewels, and other oblations of value won for them absolution, and from the iron-willed Cawdray a pointed homily they must have found it jarring to listen to. Oldhall was sent back into sanctuary.

I know nothing of Rome's curse to-day, but in St Martin-le-Grand's time it was a piercing weapon. That the evildoer chose always—nearly always—to submit to the Church's discipline does not surprise me—

"Let him be accursed in the town and in the field, in entering and on going out; let him be accursed in his house, eating or drinking, sleeping or waking; let him be accursed by land or by water, accursed in sitting or standing, in working or reposing; let him be accursed in every place, in all his works, in his outward limbs and his entrails, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head let there be no soundness in him; let his way be dark and slippery, his children orphans, his wife a

widow, the Angel of the Lord chastising him; let his fate and his portion be with Dathan and Abiron, who went down into hell alive, and with Judas the betrayer of God, and with those who said to God 'Depart from us, we have not known Thy ways;' let his body be as leprous as King Uzziah and Miriam the sister of Moses; be he also on account of his demerits struck with St Anthony's fire; and for his multiplied misdeeds and impenitent heart let him be consumed by the judgment of heaven. As these candles [the clergy throw down their lighted tapers on the floor] are extinguished, so may his soul be extinguished; let him be delivered over from the help of God to the eternal company of the devils whom he served here on earth, unless he make condign reparation of the injuries and violence done to us and to our Church. So be it, so be it."

St. Martin's was somewhat rich in hot language. My choice favours the curse of Eustace Count of Boulogne, protecting his gift: "If any of my sons or relatives, instigated by the devil, shall wish to diminish or infringe the liberties of the church, let him be banished from the company of God and the blessed Martin, and from our good will."

Felons on their way from Newgate to execution on Tower Hill were taken past the south gate of St Martin-le-Grand. Some forlorn men sought its liberty, but few successfully. Sir Roger Clifford, a protester in arms against Richard III.'s usurpation, so attempted to break free from the custody of the Sheriff and shelter himself in the precinct; but he suffered his fate. A curious practice was

recalled at the Star Chamber trial before alluded to, that when in ancient times the King's justices sat in St Martin's gate, as being a place outside the City, to try causes of treason or felony, the prisoners were placed before them on the other side of the street and were carefully guarded from advancing; for traitor or felon, if once he passed the kennel in the middle of the street, could claim the sanctuary of Holy Church pertaining to St Martin's, and all proceedings against him became void.

The gate was a place of danger to be avoided by any man having a lurking enemy. There are cases on record of John Frowe, of Lincoln, who dogged his enemy, Robert Dodmerton, with a drawn dagger in hand till, near St Martin's gate, he stabbed him mortally in the neck, and himself immediately slipped into the sanctuary; and of Lullay, a butcher, who stabbed a man in the highway and claimed immunity, and others like. In one notable year during the Wars of the Roses, when freemen of London and "foreign" residents clashed in serious affray in the streets, the sanctuary men of St Martin's sallied out and joined the mob in plundering the strangers.

It is misfortune that the evil wrought at St Martin-le-Grand should entirely have overshadowed the good, for wherever religious men have

laboured some good has resulted, some culprit steeped in crime—" murderer, traitor, robber, money-clipper," it may be—has been brought by example to a knowledge of better things. William of Wykeham apart, few of St Martin's officers, placemen in the larger numbers, have been renowned for grace, though for Thomas Bourchier, afterwards Cardinal Archbishop and the patron of Caxton, should be reserved kindly remembrance.

The College did not survive the dissolution of the religious houses. Early in the short reign of Edward VI. the church was razed level with the ground, and not for three and a half centuries has there been a St Martin-le-Grand, though the name has survived in the locality, and in our time, while Sir Robert Smirke's building last occupied the site, as the General Post Office.

A libertine sanctuary, like that of Whitefriars, grew up under Queen Elizabeth, and much of its dissolute associations returned. The place became a headquarters for the manufacture of false jewellery. The flames of the Great Fire in 1666, sweeping furiously across London, consumed all, after which the area was clean built; and never was London again to shelter a place quite so vile as the old St Martin-le-Grand.

IX

SWEETSTUFF

I HAD asked at the sweetstuff shop for half-a-pound of "Jumbo's Chains," an honest request, I take it, and calculated to give offence to none.

The young woman across the counter I thought pert. It was not enough for her to repeat the request with a simulated air of wonderment. Was it something unnatural? She must toss her head, with its tower of raven curls. I do not like the sweetstuff young woman of these commercial days, if this be the true type. In my youth they were motherly souls who presided at such emporiums, with kindly eyes that beamed above the trays full of delectables upon their juvenile customers. When the heartache was evident and farthings ran short, I had known them on occasion project an extra toffee drop into the screw of paper containing the small purchase, and send away the happy feaster with a soft pat on the head, remembering that they had been children once. That must have been an awful long time ago, it seemed to our

wondering minds—a diminutive sister and myself, and I the younger of the two. The change, like a deal else, is not for the better.

"'Jumbo's Chains!' I've never heard of them," said the pert young woman.

"But surely——" I ventured. Such depth of ignorance of her business a little astonished me.

"We don't keep them here," she snapped, and turned from me to give conversation to another young person assisting behind the counter.

It was perhaps a little absent-minded of me to have overlooked all the years that have gone by. That obstacle I often stumble across. Jumbo, the big African bull elephant at the Zoological Gardens at Regent's Park, the female elephant Alice, and America's greatest showman, Phineas Barnum, together filled the main sheet of the daily newspaper in those back years. Jumbo secured honours withheld from Princes by having the verisimilitude of his massive form in miniature encased in sweetstuff rock. This it was the delight of children, breaking the stick, to find "all through," and thereafter to eat. Only the gods of the play-room were so honoured. I had passed the sweetstuff stage of life, but well remember the commotion. It must have been in the earliest eighties.

Jumbo was acquired from the Zoological

Society of London by Phineas Barnum for his travelling show. Jumbo had lived content at Regent's Park, and made friends. He objected to leave. They built a massive travelling cage at his door, floored with beams calculated to sustain the weight of tons, in which to transport him to the docks for shipment to America. He sniffed the whole structure with his trunk, and refused to enter. The blandishments of his keeper were unavailing. (I talked with Jumbo's keeper in the elephant house recently, for the hale old veteran still is there.)

Barnum, most astute of showmen, was to have his opportunity. There was the elephant Alice. Somebody—goodness knows who, for the world knows nothing of its greatest humbugs—set London agog with the legend that the two were a devoted couple, that Jumbo refused to leave Alice. There was at once the element and novelty of elephantine romance.

It was a coloured picture of the elephant, much faded and dust-stained, that I chanced to see when looking into an old print dealer's window by Red Lion Square which brought it all back to memory before I entered the confectioner's shop, vacant-minded as to what I should purchase but for that.

Thousands had flocked to the Zoo, greatly to

advantage its coffers. Jumbo gorged himself with buns, of these offerings choosing only the best. The newspaper Press filled its centre columns with Jumbo's daily bulletin, his emotional heart-burnings, his visitors, his stout resistance when with iron chains men tried unavailingly to haul him into the travelling cage. The cable flashed across interviews with Barnum in America. Barnum made nothing of the week or two's delay till at last Jumbo was trapped—why should he, for it had given him the biggest advertisement of his life in two hemispheres? The sweetmeat manufacturer canonized the idol in "Jumbo's Chains." Street boys whistled and hummed the most popular song of the day, the words running like this—

"Jumbo said to Alice,
'I love you;'
Alice said to Jumbo,
'I don't believe it's true;
If you only loved me
As you say you do,
You wouldn't go to Yankee-land,
And leave me at the Zoo.'"

These jingles take a notching hold in the memory. I have read Magna Carta, and do not recall its lines so well, and historically it is not less important.

After all, what should the young woman know

of Jumbo? Surely she had no part in that wave of sentimentality in which we could afford to indulge in the early eighties over the broken domestic felicity (quite imaginary) of the Zoo's elephant house. Much has happened since then, sterner things, and perhaps to-day we could not be quite so silly. The thought softened the asperity with which at the outset I had regarded her conduct. I ventured again.

"Then you can give me some jujubes," I asked, after racking the memory till some name once familiar but forgotten by disuse came back. In the long past, as a small boy, I had enjoyed those delicacies.

"Jujubes!" The pert young woman repeated the name in a tone of incredulity. What strange manner of being was I? Had I come out of the Ark? Was I trying to poke fun, or only to bewilder her? All these thoughts seemed reflected in her expressive face, the upturned eyebrow, as I stood there, believing in my foolishness that at last I had evolved from mental depths a word of universal use. Surely the world and the dictionary makers had not lost knowledge of jujubes, the soft, pliant comestible, with a coating of atomic sugar, that often as a juvenile I had squeezed between the teeth, too fond, too delectable, to pass backwards to the throat till its diminution in size

threatened that it should elude the final gulp altogether.

"Oh, yes," said the pert young woman. (She must know something of sweetstuffs, being there.) "You mean glycerine jujubes—for the throat. You get them at the chemist's."

I looked around, distraught. Why, in a bowl close at hand was the very thing I sought, not the tasteless concoction for which chemists overcharge —jujubes piled high. They looked much the same as when, in the years gone by, I had bought them in pennyworths, regarding the quarter-pound as a wholesale order. I would teach this young woman her business.

"They are there," I said, pointing.

"We call them pastilles," she responded distantly, "at least, ever since I have known them." There was a note of detachment from all interest in whatever name ages remote from her own may have chosen.

In truth, I found myself in a foreign land. Moyra, youngest and most dictatorial of my great-nieces, had been insistent that never, never had I brought her sweetmeats—which, when I think of it, is true, for many things have been in my thoughts and I have entered many disputations, but what children like and what is not good for them has not been either one or the other. The

omission should be made good. But I did not know the hazard of the venture. My old learning in sweetstuffery I found of no avail. I was out of date. I must begin over again. This is an age of aeroplanes, and motor-cars and wireless wonders, in which "Hundreds and thousands" seem remote as men of the Drift. They have lost importance. Red and white, I had known these well enough, in the tall glass bottles, but dare I inquire for them of the imposing young woman of the raven curls?

Memories of lost delights came storming back. Nothing, I feel sure, does one forget; the memory lies in the brain, and only needs a stimulus of the nerve cells or the grey matter to revive it. We have in that magic box all the machinery to be juveniles again, but the moment that comes back is fleeting; it is only with the really young that it lasts. "Vanilla ice, I must take some of that, too," I said, really quite apologetically, having received the pastilles. The knowledge of my ignorance had humbled me before the young person.

It had been a joy, that vanilla ice that I remembered, laid out in thick slabs on the glass over the counter; a full three-quarter inch thick to be the best—a flat of ice, something like the inner part of a soft chocolate cream, covered top

and bottom with a generous layer of vanilla chocolate. I saw chocolates at the counter.

Once I bought chocolates—once !—like these, too; how little such things change—once !—in the long ago.

But to my confusion vanilla ice, like so much else, the young woman had never heard of. "All sorts" came to mind, a medley of sticky and firm, of hard and soft, but I lacked courage to ask for them. What important title might now conceal the homely mixture I did not know. Before next I came shopping for sweetstuffs I must learn the tongue. The young woman seemed to wait till I should say something intelligible; and I was annoyed. The magnificence of this shop was itself an offence. Its shining brass and wealth of plate glass seemed to emulate the artistic tastes of the public-house decorator, so far removed was it from the homely little shop stowed away in a corner that I had known, where English was understood and small people could get what they wanted—whether sweetstuff, or blood alleys, or coloured "transfers," or the marvellous serpent's egg, to which boys applied a lighted match and a thing of mystery uncoiled. The mothers were poorly replaced by this quite superior young person who assisted.

It was the sight of a label proclaiming "Coco-

nut toffee" that aroused the latent devil in me. Of course I knew it. Should I forget? A plague on your "Coconut toffee," and all such new-fangled, empty, high-sounding, bombastic names! I would sweep them from the shop. They do not so deceive me. I, with all my ignorance, would get level with the young person.

Should I shout "Stick-jaw!" and dash headlong out of the shop?

On reflection—No. Learned societies have done me the honour of listening to me, have even given me fellowship. Could I expect a quiet audience while I discoursed upon the Piltdown skull, or, cornered in the quadrangle of Burlington House, joined issue with the physicists on Einstein's fascinating Theory of Relativity, when it was open to any greyhead there, rejuvenated by awakened recollection of his own boyish scrapes, to interject, "Yah! who ran out of the sweetstuff shop?" In my time I have dared Smith Minor (to-day an erudite professor) that I "would do his dags," but there are acts and words possible to callow youth which are not admissible to ripening years.

That good, benevolent Alderman and fairy godfather of all poor crippled children, Sir William Treloar, Bart., has told me that when he was a schoolboy living on Ludgate Hill it was

the custom of his fellows with books and satchel to make forays up Fleet Street, and especially to a barber's shop against old Temple Bar, which had convenient doors of entry and exit into the City and Westminster. They would rush in at one door, shout insultingly "Sweeny Tod!" to the astonished barber and his lathered customers, and dash out at the other. It were best done in company, taking the chance of one boy being collared. The Lord Mayor that was to be had himself experienced the barber's cuffs.

The disputation over the counter attracted an elderly man from an ante-room out into the shop, the master or manager of the establishment, no doubt. He was thin and pale. Chance took me to the biggest toy show ever got together, at the British Trade Fair at The Crystal Palace, and there I had been curious to notice that the attendants at the toy stalls mostly were jolly round men, and I imagine boisterous in nature, as if infected in life by some of the exuberant fun of their own toys. That figure I would wish to see in all who cater for juvenile happiness. The sweetstuff master, built quite unlike this, wore a sad look—saddened, perhaps, by selling so much stuff for which years ago, amidst such abundance, he must have lost all care. He would not concede that fashions in sweetmeats had greatly changed.

From him I learnt new lore, taking his confidence, for search after strange knowledge has made an arrant gossip of me. Bull's-eyes were to-day much the same as forty years ago, and to be found in all the shops, but for years they had gone out of favour in London and the southern counties. They were national in the North of England, as are peppermints in Scotland. The war brought back their popularity in the south, soldiers coming to London making demand for them, and in response the black and white stripe reappeared in the shop windows. A Lambeth firm of manufacturers must have made a fortune out of cases of bull's-eyes sent to the camps.

As for names, the soft fondants of other days had become "creams," but that was only a shortening, the proper name being still fondant creams. Barley sugar, one of the oldest favourites, keeps in demand. It is merely a toffee made in spiral sticks, and has nothing to do with barley, but was so named generations ago because confectioners broke the grain of the sugar with barley water. Marzipan, often thought a modern confection, is as old as Shakespeare, who mentions it. Butter Scotch—why "Scotch" is a mystery even in the trade.

I had touched a reminiscent chord in him, and he rambled on, talking names of sweets utterly

strange to me, but some familiar, like almond rock, sugar almonds and acid drops—the best of acid drops in these days to be purchased at the chemist's, and sold at prices at which no confectioner could expect sales.

Vanilla ice he allowed was no longer made, and was forgotten. It used to be manufactured cheaply, but what could one do with sugar at nineteenpence a pound?—confectioners used to pay three-halfpence for it. The public grumbled at tenpence per pound, then the controlled price, but the confectioners' price was nearly double. Chocolates were the mainstay of the confectionery trade to-day. I thought him a little contemptuous, as if questioning how should the yeoman strain of England be maintained in a race nurtured on chocolates, really a French dainty, the taste for which a generation of unregenerates had imported.

These?—yes, they were wholly our own.

My eye had caught the trim little box, decorated with what might have been a Chelsea wall-paper, the lid raised temptingly to display the short sticks of sweetstuff inside. There was the red stick, red outside and a toothsome grey-coloured peppermint within; the multi-coloured stick, the blue and red and orange winding round in the ribbon fashion of the markings of a barber's

pole over a speckled centre; the plain rock, same all through; the stick of almonds embedded in toffee, and cased in transparent oily paper to prevent its stickiness from contaminating the others. Honest native sweetstuff, how well I had known it as a boy, when I had determined that when grown up and I possessed really big money I would lay in great store of this priceless treasure. But, lack-a-day! why should it be that even as growth stops, the desire ceases and love of sweetmeats departs? It is the simplest and most satisfying of life's pleasures. I had not, possessing money, given a thought to sweetstuff rock these many decades, but the sight of the stumpy oblong box brought rushing back the memories of lost delights. Moyra should know those delights. Two boxes I ordered.

The merchant seemed amused at my enthusiasm. "'Old English Goodies' we call them; they still have a sale," he explained.

Bless me—Old English, eh? A good thing that I am not a woman of fashion, and tender about the passing years.

X

A PARSON ON THE SCAFFOLD

ST GREGORY by Paul's was a little parish church that stood at the south-west corner of the old Cathedral, almost touching the wall. Its tower hardly reached the height of the Cathedral nave. "St Paul's may be called the Mother Church indeed," wrote Thomas Fuller, of the *Worthies*, "having one babe in her body (St Faith's) and another in her arms." The last was St Gregory's. Laud had partially dismantled the church in his reforming schemes. The ruin left by the Great Fire of London in the year 1666 was not rebuilt.

So St Gregory's passed out of London's life in the heat and tumult and noise of the Great Fire. I am concerned only with its last parson—not actually last in order of those who ministered, but among those who count. Parson I use advisedly, and it is only the foolish who find objection in the good old word, for in the Church's unsettlement in Commonwealth days the status of the parochial clergy was not a little ambiguous. John Hewitt,

Doctor of Divinity, had been admitted to St Gregory's " by the affection of the parish." The preferment was perhaps irregular, and whether rector or vicar what matters ?

John Hewitt perished on the scaffold at Tower Hill, one other victim of plot and counter-plot that in the centuries have brought so many distinguished heads to roll in the sawdust there. He was born a gentleman and bred a scholar, and was a divine before the beginning of the troubles. When King Charles I.'s standard was raised at Oxford, Hewitt was with the eager throng who, in the first flush of enthusiasm, offered their swords, and he lived in the Royalist army till the destruction of all its hopes. Likely enough, being a minister of the Gospel of Peace, he did not himself fight.

The new order thereafter established in the country allowed him liberty. He found a new sphere of activity in the City of London, where at the church under the shadow of Old St Paul's he preached, " with great applause," says Clarendon.

All men knew Hewitt's views. Notoriously among Puritans he was a malignant. With hardly an effort at concealment, he had invited his congregation " to remember a distressed friend," and money so collected in England for the exiled King was passed into France. Of that there was ample

evidence. The strongest reason existed for belief that Hewitt himself had been engaged in more than one mission to the Continent. Years went by—years of disillusionment as Cromwell out of surprising success was making failure, and he was not touched. Many supporters of the monarchy suffered arrest or were driven into exile, but never he. Had Hewitt been given two years longer he would have had the joy of witnessing the Restoration. Perhaps his sacred calling, his blameless life spent in the service of others and the affection in which he was held by a wide section of the London populace, his birth and social position, may have made his political enemies hesitate—who knows?

His wife was a daughter of Robert Bertie, first Earl of Lindsay, who was slain at Edgehill. She, at least, would have no mercy shown to his judges. When again a King sat on the English throne she petitioned the House of Lords, representing that her late husband, Dr. John Hewitt, was cruelly sentenced to die as a traitor by a tyrannical court of justice, and soon after put to death, to the unspeakable grief and irreparable loss of the petitioner and her fatherless children. She prayed their lordships to except those presumptuous murderers out of the Act of Oblivion, and to bring all or some principal of them to speedy justice. Womanlike, she could not forgive.

Little we know of Hewitt, but from that little emerges a most engaging personality, nothing soured by the hard adversity of the times; a man with the natural gift of friendship, possessing a strength of character that no shocks or temptations could divert from his assigned purpose. "Doctor mellifluus, doctor altivolans, et doctor inexhaustibilis" he was styled by a contemporary.

The long arm of Cromwell at last stretched out to reach him when in 1658 Stapley's plot was discovered. Of Hewitt's connivance in that effort to commission in this country officers for the King in the rising then contemplated there is no certain evidence, for he refused to plead, denying the competency of the court, and he was condemned in contumacy. Stapley's own testimony necessarily is suspect. On the scaffold Hewitt denied having seen the King or given shelter to the Marquis of Ormonde, who had come to England to ascertain the state of the Royalist preparations. As for a plot for setting London on fire, he declared that he so trembled at the thought of such a horror, that had he known of it he would have been the first to disclose his knowledge. Never had he met or been in correspondence with persons who would have carried out such a design. But of his sympathy with, if not actual participation in, a premature effort to bring about the Restoration

there can be little doubt. Cromwell, his mind always filled with Old Testament imagery, likened Hewitt to " a flaming torch in the midst of a sheaf of corn," meaning that as a public preacher it was within his power to foster discontents and seditions, and from his own view-point of the country's needs the old Protector was right.

Hewitt complained that he was not heard by counsel on the question of the court's competency, and that when he would have pleaded he was not allowed to do so. He knew nothing of law. A London Alderman, Foot, of Coleman Street Ward, sat on this court of justice, with much dislike and unwillingness by his own testimony. Probably no plea by Hewitt would have affected the result. He had strong advocacy to plead for him. Cromwell's daughter Mary had married Lord Falconbridge with the ceremony observed at the time, and afterwards they were privately married by Hewitt in St Gregory's according to the prescribed rites of the Church. The lady was said secretly to have attended the church services. To his own daughter's urgent and piteous appeal to him to preserve Hewitt's life, reinforced by that of her husband, Cromwell was inexorable. It was in his mind that churchmen were his mortal enemies. They should see what they were to trust to if they stood in need of his mercy.

The conviction was for treason against his Highness the Lord Protector and the Commonwealth. The sentence was that passed upon all traitors, whether to King or Lord Protector was the same—that John Hewitt, Doctor of Divinity, should be conveyed back again into the Tower of London, and from thence through the middle of the City of London, directly to be drawn under the gallows of Tyburn, and upon the said gallows there to be hanged, and being alive to be cut down to the ground, and—but the ghastly details of mutilation and quartering are best omitted. Any who want them may find them in a thousand records. For what reason we do not know, Cromwell paid to this London divine the small grace of permitting that he should die the more honourable death by the axe.

On the morning of the 8th June, 1658, Hewitt came out upon the scaffold at Tower Hill. The usual crowd of onlookers had assembled. "I am now become a public spectacle to men and angels," he told the people, "and I hope God, who is omnipotent, is now beholding me with some pity, and great mercy and compassion. I here give up myself freely and willingly to be a State martyr for the public good." It was his trust that the God of Mercy would pardon and forgive all those responsible for his fate. He was brought

into the world, he said, to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel. The Church he commended for purity of doctrine and orderly discipline, "till a sad reformation had spoiled the face of the Church, and made it a query whether it was a Church or no."

"I cannot go," he declared finally, "without my prayers for a blessing upon the people of this land," for whom he then supplicated.

The prayer has been printed, and little can it have pleased those officers of the law who stood around awaiting the headsman's stroke. His faith in God and King was alike strong unto death. Pity that the Stuarts were not more worthy of those stout hearts who served them:

"Lord bless us all, and bless Him—the Posterity—which in Authority ought to rule over us, and be above us. Bless him in his soul and in his body, in his friends, and in his servants and all his relations. Give religious hearts to them that now rule in Authority, loyal hearts in the subjects towards their Supreme. Restore those banished, and of Thy great mercy and in Thy good time deliver Thy people out of their necessities."

There is no word written of the moment when the axe fell. Simply we are told by sympathizers that John Hewitt underwent his fate with great Christian courage.

Men carried the mangled corpse of their pastor into St Gregory's church for burial. There on the

following Sunday the Rev Nathaniel Hardy preached from the text Isaiah lvii. 1, "The righteous perisheth," with such outspokenness and assurance of popular approval that he printed the sermon under his own name. He dwelt upon the loss of "this vigilant and faithful minister of God," who though out of the fight was not out of mind, nor would he be forgotten. "The whole course of his life was a constellation of graces and virtues, both as he was a Christian and as he was a Minister."

Let that be John Hewitt's epitaph.

XI

OLIVER GOLDSMITH'S LAST HOME

A DOZEN years have now gone by since the sight of a formidable crack in the main wall of No. 1 Brick Court brought me up short in my morning walk in the Temple. Don't think that I owned Brick Court. Had I laid claim to a single chamber in that square, substantial, roomy building, be sure the Benchers of Middle Temple would have smothered me under parchment proofs that theirs alone is the legal, incontestable, inalienable right to the freehold. But it is one of the joys won from association with historical things that, as familiarity grows, there comes with it a pleasant sense of sharing possession. Let the Benchers extract their last penny of rent, the associations of these old Temple courts—historical, literary, legal—are as much mine as they are theirs. I thus go about London as rich a man as any.

No doubt the crack in the wall had been there before, gradually widening. I thought it a bad sign for the preservation of this ancient house,

built on the steep slope of the hill and apparently breaking into halves. The gifted architect of the Temple evidently thought the same, for soon after all the lawyer tenants were ejected and the building razed to the ground, giving place to a new No. 1 Brick Court, as good as the former one in everything except age.

It was a popular tradition that this was one of the original brick buildings of the Temple, come down to us, perhaps, from the spacious days of Great Elizabeth. Long ago Spenser had noted the rise of

> "those bricky towres,
> The which on Themmes brode aged back doe ryde,
> Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
> There whylome wont the Templar Knights to byde,
> Till they decayd through pride."

Obviously to a knowing eye, this building was nothing of the sort, but had been erected soon after the Great Fire of London, probably about 1679. There was then a good deal of pulling down and rebuilding in the Temple. But the earliest of the Temple's brick houses stood on this same site. Thomas Daniell was treasurer of the Inn early in Queen Elizabeth's reign, and it is recorded by the Middle Temple "Parliament" that that worthy having spent much labour and money on the new "bricke buyldinges," his

nephew, John Daniell, should as reward have admission to any vacant chamber pleasing him without fine.

Afterwards came other blocks of brick chambers in Vine Court (James I.) and in Pump Court, Elm Court, and elsewhere under Charles I. Possibly because of these brick buildings, Middle Temple escaped with the loss of only one house in the flames of 1666, when the neighbouring Inner Temple was almost completely burnt out. The order went out in the year 1678, "that Brick Court and the garden on the north side shall be made one court, and buildings erected on all sides of it," and in these demolitions probably disappeared those "bricky towres" that Edmund Spenser had seen and sung of.

London under Elizabeth being almost wholly timber-built, with some conscious pride in their achievement the Middle Temple Benchers had named this little beflagged square "Brick Court."

The living interest in Brick Court is not in what has gone, but in what survives. No. 2 was Oliver Goldsmith's last home. In the rooms two floors up, on the right-hand side as you enter to ascend the staircase, he passed the closing years of his warm-hearted, irresponsible, thriftless life. A plaque high on the external wall marks the set. The death chamber is but a square cupboard—really

it is little more—a central enclosure having no ventilation through the outer walls, and lighted only by a dim pane of glass or the open door. Thackeray, himself a later tenant in this house, of course explored the rooms, and he wrote to Forster—

"I was in Goldsmith's chambers in Brick Court the other day. The bedroom is a closet without any light in it. It quite pains one to think of the kind old fellow dying off there. There is some good carved work in the rooms; and one can fancy him with General Oglethorpe and Topham Beauclerc, and the fellow coming in with the screw of tea and sugar. What a fine picture Leslie would make of it!"

No change has been made in the little death chamber, save that the present occupant of the set has stuffed it with books—a fitting use, and one that surely Goldsmith himself would have liked best.

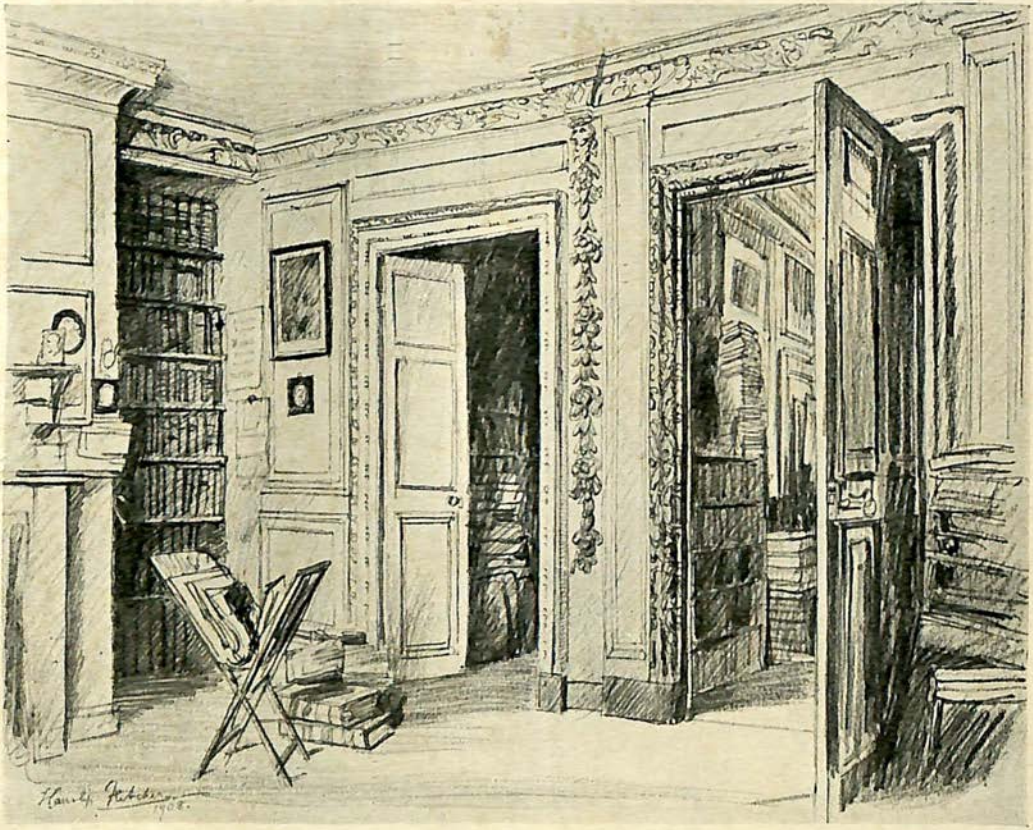
He came to these rooms in 1768. The outlook brightened, and he had money in hand, although then, as always, he was deeply in debt. Garrick had refused his *The Good-Natured Man*, but a successful production of the comedy at Covent Garden Theatre brought him about £500. Fortune's wheel had turned at last in his favour (remember that for *The Vicar of Wakefield* his first payment was but £60, though perhaps more came later) and with £400 he purchased a life

lease of the Brick Court chambers; the balance, one may be sure, was quickly squandered. Dr Johnson is said first to have spurred on Goldsmith to improve upon his customarily squalid surroundings, little as encouragement in extravagance was needed.

Goldsmith furnished his chief apartment with Wilton carpet, blue moreen-covered sofa and chairs corresponding, blue moreen curtains, chimney glass, Pembroke and card tables, and tasteful bookshelves. As you stand to-day in the amply proportioned sitting-room, with three long windows overlooking Essex Court, where the leaves of the trees rustling in the wind fleck the glass panes with shadow, it is easy to imagine it as when he occupied it. Mr H. Hamilton Fox, the present occupant of the chambers, has followed the example of many previous tenants by treating them with reverent care. The carvings about the door-cases and in the cornice have been coated with sombre black, much to their advantage. Once they were picked out, in curious taste, in florid reds and blues and greens.

The literary workshop is believed to have been the smaller room looking into Brick Court. Structurally there have been no alterations.

London's distractions interfered with Goldsmith's work, and for spells of serious labour he



GOLDSMITH'S ROOMS IN BRICK COURT, TEMPLE
From a drawing by Hanslip Fletcher

went into country lodgings.* *She Stoops to Conquer* was written at Hyde, a farm six miles on the Edgware road, to which he often retired. For this reason there is difficulty in saying where his manuscripts were produced. He appears to have written in Brick Court the greater part of *The Deserted Village*, perhaps to-day the most widely appreciated of his poems. It was commenced in 1768, soon after arrival there. His young lawyer friend and fellow Templar, Cooke, calling when two days' progress upon the poem had been made, found that ten lines (fifth to fourteenth) had been the morning's output; and when Cooke entered his chambers Goldsmith read them aloud—

"Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every spot would please,
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm,
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
The never failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topp'd the neighbouring hill,
The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade
For talking age and whispering lovers made."

"Come," added Goldsmith, "let me tell you this is no bad morning's work; and now, my

* I have drawn freely in what follows upon my own *Fleet Street in Seven Centuries*, now out of print.

dear boy, if you are not better engaged, I should be glad to enjoy a shoemaker's holiday with you." The invitation was the prelude to a ramble from the Temple into the country.

The social life into which Goldsmith launched when settled in Brick Court added to his embarrassments. The bills of Mr Filby, the tailor, of The Harrow in Water Lane, hard by, grew larger. The "Tyrian bloom satin-grain, and garter-blue silk breeches," were charged at £8 2s. 7d. Another suit was "lined with silk, and with gold buttons." In fancy, I have seen that clumsy little figure here at home, the plain features marked with smallpox, and short thick legs, arrayed "in purple silk small-clothes, a handsome scarlet roquelaure buttoned close under the chin, and with all the additional importance derivable from a full-dress professional wig, a sword, and a gold-headed cane." Up this same oak staircase that we tread to-day—the Temple oak was chosen to endure—might often have been seen toiling the unwieldy form of Samuel Johnson, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, David Garrick, Edmund Burke, Hugh Kelly, and others of that brilliant circle of conversationalists in which the host did not shine.

That, at least, is the contemporary judgment, which posterity has accepted. Admit that Gold-

smith said many good things: his description of Boswell as "only a burr that Tom Davies (the bookseller) threw at Johnson in jest, and he has stuck to him ever since"; his suggestion to enlarge the club because the original members had by that time "travelled over each other's minds"; his happy remark that if Johnson made little fishes talk, he would make them talk like whales—these are not to be improved upon. Johnson it was who said that "The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation is this, that he goes on without knowing how he is to get off." And there is Garrick's playful epitaph of him—

"Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll."

I always carry upstairs with me to that one ample room in the set of chambers the recollections of delightful days that the family of Mr Seguin have kept for us. They were guests at Brick Court. Seguin was an Irish merchant to two of whose children Goldsmith stood godfather. "They talked," says Forster, "of supper parties with younger people, as well in the London chambers as in suburban lodgings, preceded by blind man's buff, forfeits, or games of cards, and where Goldsmith, festively entertaining them all, would make frugal supper for himself off boiled milk. They related how he would sing all kinds of

Irish songs; with what special enjoyment he gave the Scotch ballad of 'Johnny Armstrong' (his old nurse's favourite); how cheerfully he would put the front of his wig behind, or contribute in any other way to the general amusement; and to what accompaniment of uncontrollable laughter he danced a minuet with Mr Seguin."

The learned Blackstone was a tenant of the rooms immediately below, where he laboured at his *Commentaries*, that work upon which successive generations of rising barristers have been nurtured. He complained of disturbance by the noise of revelry that went on over his head. A Mr Children succeeded him, and made the same complaint.

For six years Goldsmith maintained close associations with the Temple, broken by many intervals of absence. Happy days were spent when he left care behind, and visited Paris, accompanying Mrs Horneck and her two daughters, whom he had known through Reynolds. He was in Brick Court in 1773 when a libel by his old enemy Kenrick, printed in the *London Packet*, roused him to personal vengeance. Kenrick had written insultingly of his passion for the lovely Mary Horneck, the "Jessamy Bride." Goldsmith sallied out to the shop of Evans, the publisher, and struck him with his cane. A

struggle ensued, an overturned lamp swinging from the ceiling covered both combatants with oil, and the angry poet rode home to the Temple in a coach. He paid £50 to a Welsh charity to settle a threatened law-suit.

Then with the suddenness of tragedy the bright days were eclipsed, and there came the end—debt and remorse hovering about the death-bed in that pathetic little closet in Brick Court, without any light in it. Goldsmith returned from Hyde in the middle of March, 1774. His spirit was crushed; he was worried and ill. In the country he had worked upon his *Animated Nature*, and seen it ready for the press, its proceeds long since received and spent. "Was ever poet so trusted before?" asked Johnson, reporting Goldsmith's debts to be £2,000.

On the 25th of that month he took to his bed, with less than a fortnight of life remaining for him. "Is your mind at ease?" asked Dr Turton, who attended at the bedside. "No, it is not," was Goldsmith's melancholy answer. These were his last words, and at a quarter to five on the morning of Monday, the 4th April, 1774, he expired. He was but forty-five.

Down these same oak stairs men carried his coffin, and there were those gathered about who felt his loss—outcasts of the great city whom

Goldsmith in his generous, large-hearted life had befriended. Johnson wrote his epitaph, which is in Westminster Abbey, but his bones do not rest in our national mausoleum.

Look into the little burial ground north of the Temple Church, where gravel and worn tombstones laid flat have made a smooth walk. You find a coped stone bearing the words, "Here lies Oliver Goldsmith."

The location given may not be exactly true, for Goldsmith had no honour at his grave till the middle of last century, and when this stone was there placed in the year 1856 knowledge of the exact site of interment had been lost. There was an old gardener servant who remembered being told by an earlier old gardener of the Temple that the coffin was laid at a spot a few feet nearer the church wall than that now marked. But be that right or not, Goldsmith rests undisturbed here in the sunshine and the shadow about the Temple Church. What matters a foot or two's measure?

He wrote the most human story, the most humorous play, some of the tenderest poetry, some surpassing prose. Year by year I find the wreath laid upon his stone at the death-day, and thereby, and by the stream of literary pilgrims trickling to this quiet corner, we in this twentieth century know that he is not forgotten.

XII

TREASURE HOUSES

IT was rather a trial in old days to possess treasure, but such is the cupidity born in us that men sought it. Land brought income and power, and treasure could purchase land. That apart, there was not much to be done with it. The hoarder could trust nobody, and he got nothing—not even the return of Goschen's 2½ per cent. Consols. Of course, money could be spent, and some people seized upon that idea.

Jewels were even more burdensome than accumulations of money, and still more useless. But they had this compensation. Always there were the shrines of odd saints, which might be enriched by the gift of jewels. The donor thereby obtained a reputation for devoutness, and that cheaply, for he was only handing over to the care of the Church things the care of which by himself was always a nuisance.

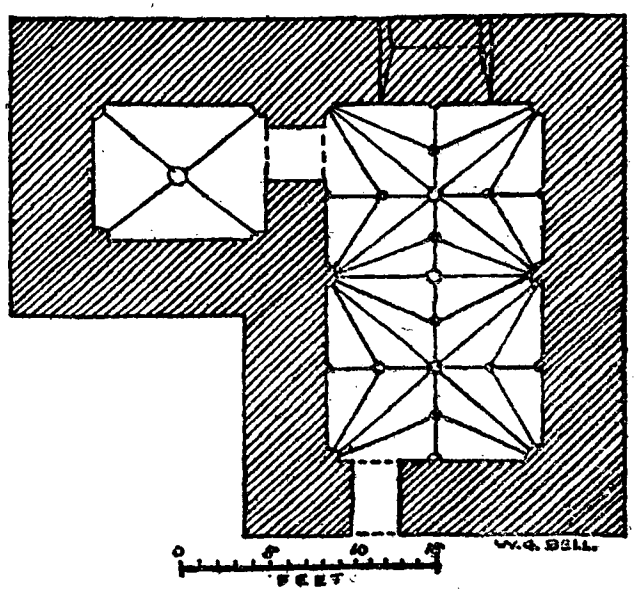
Kings were fond of thus discarding their cares. Witness Henry III.'s gifts to the Shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. A gold

image of St Edmund, crowned, having two great sapphires. A king, with a great garnet in his breast and other stones. The Blessed Virgin and her Son, set with rubies, emeralds, sapphires and garnets. His Queen gave an image of the Virgin, with emerald and ruby. Sapphires and garnets, rubies and emeralds—that they were heartily glad to get rid of these I never doubt. Precious stones are the most futile of all worldly possessions.

Yet they have through all ages been vastly prized, and through all ages have been a great nuisance to their possessors. They have tempted thieves, and many men have gone to the gibbet for them, giving in exchange life—a much more precious thing. With banks and strong rooms, and safe deposit vaults, and safes of hardened steel, we to-day shift from our shoulders much of the care that attends possession; but it was not always so. Men built for their treasure special treasure houses, and the State had many of them, and the Church still more. I went not long ago over one of these State treasure houses, the Jewel Tower at Westminster, still bearing its old name, and here it is pictured.

It is remote, unknown, a forlorn fragment of old Westminster, this Jewel Tower. Many pass by, but few see it, for it rises behind the offices and residences in Old Palace Yard. Opposite is

the House of Lords' entrance. You get by far the best glimpse of the tower from a point within College Mews. It was difficult to ascertain whose were the rights in it now, but ultimately I dis-



PLAN OF THE JEWEL TOWER

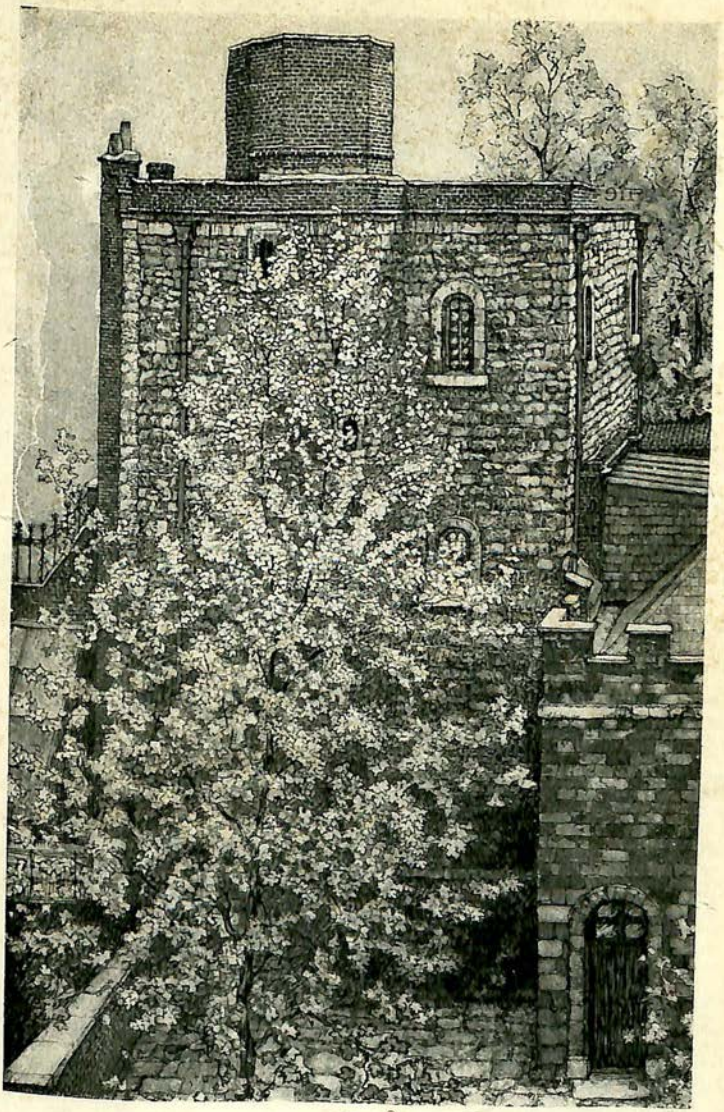
covered that control was exercised by His Majesty's Board of Trade, whose wonderful collection of standard weights and measures, well worth seeing, overflows into the old building.

They are chary of giving permission to any-

body to visit the Jewel Tower. I was privileged, but found no jewels there.

The masonry structure is very old, and its origin is lost. What King or subject built this tower, and for what purpose, none can tell. The interior vaulting of the lower chambers has moulded ribs and finely carved bosses, all suggesting the age of Richard II. Abbot Litlington is thought to have done this work, for it is much like his acknowledged work in the Westminster Cloisters. The external walls are apparently much earlier—thirteenth century. Dean Stanley, citing Widmore as authority, says the tower was sold to the Crown in the last year of King Edward III.'s reign, and suggests that its previous use was that of a monastic prison. That raises issues I make no attempt to solve. The tower stands outside the precinct or sanctuary wall, and with much more likelihood it is a relic of the ancient Royal Palace of Westminster.

Yet there is a link with the Abbey, for a part of its small plot of ground formed in ancient times part of the property which belonged to the Prior's portion. Canon Westlake tells me there are scattered references to the tower in the Abbey records. It is not clear whether what passed to Edward III. was a tower already existing, or only land. The whole subject is obscure.



THE JEWEL TOWER, WESTMINSTER
From a drawing by L. Russell Conway

Little more land is about the tower to-day than the soil upon which it stands. Were its plan regular, it would be roughly 30 feet square, but it has six sides, a square of 14 feet being taken out at one corner. Thus there is space on the lower floor for a large room and a small room, the dimensions of which are reduced by the great thickness of the walls, which at the lower window is 4 feet. Such strong building of so small a tower suggests that it was a treasure house, and this is borne out by the fact that the smaller chamber or cell—presumably the jewel chamber—can be entered only through the interior partition wall, which has space for double doors. The rooms above have a modern vaulting, no doubt put in as a security against fire.

King Charles I. and Rushworth, the Clerk Assistant of the House of Commons, retired to the seclusion of this tower to compare notes after the attempted arrest of the Five Members.

The tower has been known for ages back as the Jewel Tower, or the King's Jewel House. That probably was its earliest use, but the only records that we have of it are as a depository for Acts of Parliament. It was the "Parliament Office" wherein the records of the House of Lords were stored till their transference, under Queen Victoria, to the Victoria Tower of the modern Houses of Parliament.

It has not the strength, nor the age, of the Chapel of the Pyx in the neighbouring Westminster Abbey. That, too, was a Royal treasure house, a relic of the Saxon Confessor's original building, and perhaps the oldest chamber of all the Abbey which survives. It is built of heavy masonry, with stout, short piers from which the semicircular vaulting of the roof springs, and looks like a place that it would be impossible to force, save with connivance of those entrusted with its charge. It has double doors of great strength, with altogether seven locks. It was enclosed within the Abbey walls, and furthermore was protected by the tremendous prestige of the Church, of St Peter, and of the Saxon Confessor himself. Bold was the man who would attempt to force that stronghold. Yet it was forced, and that so early as the year 1303.

Out of this Chapel of the Pyx was extracted none other than the English Regalia and much treasure of King Edward I., accumulated for the Scottish wars, though that king's great crown and three other crowns, jewel enclustered, were left strewn about the floor, not being easily marketable, with other valuable pieces.

That was the most famous robbery in England's history, more daring than Colonel Blood's attempt on King Charles II.'s Regalia in the Tower of

London. These villains got away with chattels represented, in modern money values, by a round two millions sterling—more than a whole year's proceeds by Edward's tax-gatherers obtained by force throughout the realm of England. It is part of the story of the crime, as it has come down to us from the trial of the persons accused, that with the wicked connivance of holy men within the convent, a crop of tall flax had been specially raised in the cloister garth, that it might conceal till disposal the stolen treasure, and, in fact, did so conceal it. In that situation, but five yards of stone walk separated the tall flax from the doors of the Chapel of the Pyx. The spot is to-day the green lawn enclosed by the covered cloister walks, along which the visitor to Westminster Abbey rambles.

Edward was at Linlithgow in June, 1303, when news that his Royal treasury had been raided reached him, rousing his fierce indignation. The robbery had been perpetrated in the last days of April. Forthwith writs came down from Scotland, one hastening upon another, to arrest the Abbot of Westminster and his brethren, forty-eight in number. These and thirty-two other persons were committed to the Tower of London. The Judges were charged immediately to hear and determine the issue. Jurors in all counties where

sales had been made by the robbers scattered to collect evidence. It was their duty at that time to collect, not to judge, evidence. All knew the fury of their Royal master, happily for them absent, and trembled for his return.

As pieced together, we have a fairly complete story, though not the whole of it. John de Drokenesford, Master of the King's Wardrobe, on June 20th went with others to Westminster to investigate, "and opened the doors of the Treasury, and entered therein with the company assembled, and he found the Treasury broken into, the chests and coffers broken open, and many goods carried away"—and incidentally the crowns scattered about the floor, as already described. William the Palmer, the Keeper of the King's Palace, gave most damaging evidence, perhaps reluctantly, for there is deep suspicion of his guilty knowledge of the robbery.

He said that he saw the Sacrist of the Abbey, the Sub-prior and various monks go in and out, early and late, about the time of the burglary, and they often carried many things towards the church, what things he knew not. On a certain day the monk Alexander of Pershore and others of his brethren were seen to take a boat and row from the Abbey out upon the Thames, loading it with two large panniers covered with black

leather, in which there was a great weight—of treasure, no doubt, but that William the Palmer professed not to know. They returned after evening bell in another boat.

Five other robbers conveyed away on horseback more treasure, for two nights running. There is mention of this in the City records. It is written in Letter Book C at Guildhall that William de Kinebautone and John his brother, and Chastanea la Babere and Alice her sister, met that eventful week in a certain house within the close of Fleet Prison, together with a horseman and five other ribalds unknown, for two nights, and there spent the time until midnight eating and drinking, and then withdrew with arms towards Westminster. In the morning they returned, and this they did for two nights, and never were seen again. And because about the same time the Treasury was broken into they were held suspect of felony, and the City's officers were commanded, together with the King's marshals, to take them alive or dead.

The daring thieves had sold much stolen treasure. Richard de Podelicote, self-styled a travelling merchant for wool, cheese and butter, went to Northampton and Colchester, and there had got rid of jewels. He was seized, and was found with articles worth £2,200 in his possession

—say, £35,000 in modern values. This man was a prize to hold. Instigated thereto, no doubt, by methods of torture, he informed upon his confederates. John Allon designed the tools for the burglary, but Richard de Podelicote, according to his own account, was the prime instrument in it. When a suitor in the Westminster law courts, his cupidity had been aroused by seeing servants of the Abbey conveying plate and spoons of silver into the monks' refectory. He had broken successfully into the refectory, and there the idea came to him that a raid upon the immense wealth contained in the Treasury itself, near by, was a possible venture. He cannot have told all.

John de Ramage was suspected because he was seen coming from and going to the Abbey, and on a sudden had dressed himself very richly, and acquired horses and arms. And he boasted—the fool!—that he could buy a town if he pleased.

A linen draper of St Giles's had a large pannier full of broken vessels of gold and silver sent to him by certain monks of Westminster. The King's Proclamation, promising death of a surety to all concerned, so alarmed him that he gave the valuables to a shepherd boy, who hid them at Kentish Town; and there, verifying his story, they were found. The good monkish chroniclers have laboured, but with small success, to show

that, whose ever was the guilt, it was not among the holy monks of Westminster.

It was John de Linton who sowed the tall flax in the cloister garth, refused admission to the man who had bought the Abbey herbage to reap it, and after the robbery destroyed traces of foot-prints by scattering dirt about.

Wealthy merchants of London, I say with regret, were found to have purchased many cheap lots of precious stones and plate. Much of the scattered treasure was recovered for its rightful owner. There is strong suspicion that the robbery was arranged between the Sacrist of Westminster Abbey, Richard de Podelicote and the Keeper of the King's Palace. The Abbot and his brethren obtained their release; the Sacrist made out a case for himself—a poor one—representing that the valuables found in his cell he had seized, not knowing their origin, as a waif within the jurisdiction of the Church, and therefore properly in his keeping. The others against whom guilt was brought home passed to the gallows, and six centuries after no tears need be wasted upon their fate.

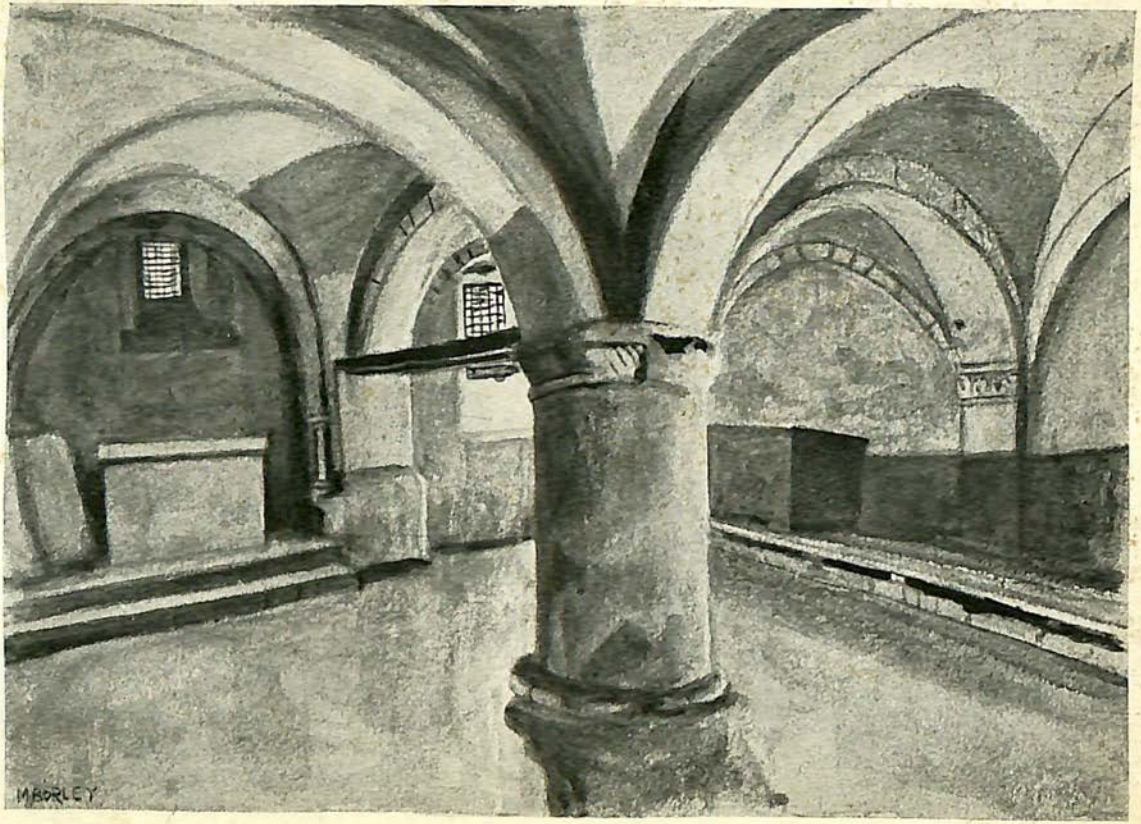
To-day the Chapel of the Pyx has a narrow way walled off, sufficient only for a passage. In the cloister without, the masonry indicated a blocked doorway, when more than half a century ago Sir

Gilbert Scott obtained permission to explore. On removing the obstructing stone courses and a quantity of dry rubbish behind, he came upon an ancient doorway, and his report says: "On the inner side of the doorway I found hanging from beneath the hinges some pieces of white leather. A friend to whom I had shown them sent a piece to Mr Quekett, the Curator of the College of Surgeons, who pronounced them to be human. It is clear that the door was entirely covered with them both within and without."

This was Edward's vengeance. These were robbers' skins.

The doorway thus revealed, after being for centuries walled up, originally gave admission to the stairs leading up to the monks' dormitory, and by it the monks passed. They had this warning always before them. The terror of the human skins, however, did not satisfy Edward or his successors as giving sufficient protection, for after the robbery the whole part was built in with masonry, there being no access to the Chapel of the Pyx save by the double doors, with seven locks, where to-day the visitor enters and steps down to the ancient stone floor.

Dean Milman wrote that in his day, "inside and outside of the door by which this passage is entered may be felt under the iron clamps fragments of



CHAPEL OF THE PYX, WESTMINSTER ABBEY
From a drawing by Mary Borley

what modern science has declared to be the skin of a human being." I wonder. You may enter the Chapel of the Pyx on Fridays (admission free) without any feeling of shrinking horror, for I have looked over its door and found nothing.

It is likely that at a later date the King's treasure was removed to that immensely strong Norman under-croft of the Chapter House, which has mention as "the Treasury of the King's Wardrobe below the Chapter House of Westminster."* It is entered only by a narrow doorway and stairs down at the angle of Poets' Corner; and there again were the ghastly trophies of nailed human skins, exhibited *in terrorem*. About this door stood the Chapel of St Blaise and what was known as the "Old Revestry," both swept away to make a clear space for the Poets' Corner as we now see it. Dart, who wrote his *Westmonasterium* in the year 1723, declared that "this chapel (which is called the Chapel of Henry VIII., for what reason I know not, unless for that he stripped it of its furniture) is enclosed with three doors, the

* Some recent writers believe the King's Treasury raided to have been the Norman under-croft of the Chapter House. There may be sufficient evidence to disturb the long tradition of the place, but I do not know it. Both this and the Pyx Chapel are below the Chapter House in the sense of being in its shadow, for only a wall's thickness separates them.

inner cancellated; the middle, which is very thick, lined with skins like parchment, and driven full of nails. These skins, they by tradition tell us, were some skins of the Danes, tann'd, and given here as a memorial of our delivery from them." I think Dart and tradition mistook their meaning.

Long centuries back, the Danes used to sail their craft up the mouths of English rivers, and landing, sack villages and churches. It seems to have been the unpleasant custom of our ancestors, when such sacrilegious robbers were taken, to flay them and nail their skins to the church door as a warning to any who came after. Worcester Cathedral bore a human skin upon its north door; the church of Hadstock, in Essex, another, said to be that of a Dane. Copford, also in Essex, had a third. Specimens of these last three are to be seen in the anatomical museum of the College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields, to which they were presented by Mr Way. It was that archæologist's curious bent to make such finds.

Frank Buckland, the naturalist, whose father was Dean of Westminster, has told that not very long ago—from his own day, of course—a portion of hard, dry skin was found underneath the bossed head of a huge iron nail that was fixed upon the door of the Abbey Chapter House.

Upon this skin were found several hairs. Mr Quekett, then Curator of the College of Surgeons, recognized this skin to be human, and asserted that it belonged to a fair-haired person.

Pepys, at Rochester Cathedral, had his curiosity excited. "Then away thence [*Diary*, 1661, April 10th] observing the great doors of the church, as they say, covered with the skins of Danes."

The walls of the under-croft of Westminster Abbey Chapter House were built 12 feet in thickness. That was thought not enough, and another ring of masonry was added, increasing the thickness to 17 feet. It is of interest to recall that this stronghold of the Abbey was again used as a treasure house in the war years of 1915 to 1918; for to its security were confided the King's Coronation Chair, and the Scone Stone upon which, till the English Edward seized it, the Scottish Kings were crowned; the two-handed sword borne before King Edward III. in his Wars in France; the helmet, shield and saddle of King Henry V., carried at his funeral, and other easily movable treasures of the Abbey. There they were thought as safe as anywhere from the bombs of a German aviator, and they were returned to public exhibition in their accustomed places only after the Armistice.

In the crypt of St John's Chapel within the Tower of London—absurdly named by the indicating sign "Raleigh's Cell"—is a strong interior vaulted cell, 8 feet by 10 feet, without light or ventilation. This is thought to have been the hold for the treasure contained within the fortress, there enjoying the church's protection.

The sanctity associated with places consecrated to God led to the use of many of our churches as storehouses for treasure, in London as elsewhere. The Temple was frequently so used. King Edward I., on return from his victorious campaign in Wales, entered the Temple with armed followers, and in pretence that he came to inspect his mother's jewels he broke open coffers and carried away £10,000 to Windsor. The Bishop of Chester had gold and silver and a quantity of jewels and precious stones in the Temple treasury when King Edward II., going there with his favourite, Piers Gaveston, raided it.

The Carmelite Priory in Fleet Street served a like purpose, though its sense of security sustained a nasty shock when in 1307 robbers broke in. That was only four years after the great haul at King Edward I.'s Royal Treasury at Westminster Abbey, already recalled. The thieves had the aid and connivance within of one Friar Judas, and they carried away forty pounds of silver stored

there by a certain knight. "They bound in an atrocious way," says an old chronicler, "the hands of the Prior and of several of the friars, and one they killed, and then took their departure. Judas also went away with them, but soon afterwards he had a halter put round his neck, and was hanged."

Friar Judas, you note—I feel sure that name was an afterthought.

XIII

DR JOHNSON'S WOMANKIND

MORE persons, I realize quite well, know and love old Samuel Johnson's gruff personality than know Gough Square. It naturally is a bit puzzling to find a square which is not of that shape at all, but is merely a passage widened out, into which you may just drive if your jarvie knows London's spider ways very intimately indeed, but cannot drive out of save back by the way you came. Then geographically it is not among the squares of London, which are about Bloomsbury and farther west. Gough Square is in the City, which explains its mystery. I would set down a stranger in newspaper land within three minutes' walk of it, with assurance that in half an hour he would not find his quest unaided.

The way by road is too tortuous to be set out in a short book, but if walking up Fleet Street's north side you turn into Hind Court or Bolt Court, both footways, you quickly stumble upon Gough Square. Samuel Johnson lived there for

eleven years, and his house still stands, filling up one end. It is the last of Johnson's London homes surviving. A hotel's rear rooms obtrude into Johnson's Court whereabouts he once lived, and the County Council's School of Photo-Engraving at the top of Bolt Court (all are courts off Fleet Street) occupies the place where he died. All good Johnsonians know this as their alphabet, but I am guiding the footsteps of the inexpert.

It is a small though substantial house in warm red brick, dating, I take it, from the first of our Georges, for Maitland, who published his *London* in 1735, described Gough Square as then recently built "with very handsome houses, well inhabited by persons of fashion." Samuel Johnson, the new tenant in the year 1748, may have felt a little strange among the quality, for he was not then the Great Cham of letters that afterwards he became. Nor was he entirely a Little Cham, for his fame was beginning, and his voice, often raised, was heard with respect. He was then thirty-nine. But most for which we remember him occurred after he had moved into Gough Square. He went there with the contract in his pocket for writing the *Dictionary of the English Language*, which, with ever buoyant hope, he expected to accomplish in three years (it took

eight) and the quiet of this by-way for the task, sheltered from the buzz and roar of the Fleet Street he knew so well, may have been the inducement.

I went over the old place the other day with a party of enthusiastic Johnsonians, filling the small rooms, making them noisy with their chatter. We followed the footsteps of Carlyle, who with difficulty had found the "stout, old-fashioned, oak-balustraded house." These, I was told at the head of the stairs on the first floor, were the salons in which Johnson received his guests, panelled, rather poky, right and left of the landing or vestibule. The sleeping-rooms were next above, but possibly the Sage's own sanctum, which we know was upstairs, was one of these. In the topmost long garret, the length of the house-front, with its sloping roof, Johnson's six amanuenses working upon the *English Dictionary* toiled at their heavy task.

All this left me cold, for I had been there before. My interests for the moment were with Mrs Samuel Johnson, and I sought out the kitchen.

It is below ground, of course, rather like a vault, notable for nothing except the wide space of its open fireplace. Its proportions seem to tell that not only were men great drinkers in those Georgian days, but great eaters as well. I must

DR. JOHNSON'S HOUSE IN GOUGH SQUARE
From a drawing by Hanslip Fletcher

seem horribly ungallant going into the kitchen to visualize Mrs Samuel Johnson, but where else should I place the good lady? Of course, her rightful place should be in the salon, by Sam Johnson's side, receiving the great—for Joshua Reynolds, Samuel Richardson, Roubillac, Dr Burney, Hugh Kelly and more we know were guests at Gough Square. Garrick often, I imagine, for from this house Johnson went out to see the performance of his tragedy *Irene*, which Garrick produced at Drury Lane. I love the story repeated by Boswell (very likely it is untrue) of Johnson stolidly seated among the audience, and being dissatisfied with some of the speeches and the conduct of his own play expressing his disapproval aloud. The same incident is told of La Fontaine.

But I am doubtful about Mrs Johnson's place. I think she was a good housewife and helpmate, and for this reason—you may think it a strange one. When Sir Joshua took Roubillac to Gough Square, the Sage, we are told, received them with great civility, and took them up into a garret, "which he considered as his library, where beside his books, all covered with dust, there was an old crazy deal table, and still worse elbow chair, having only three legs." Long service was done by these wrecks of furniture. Dr Burney also

knew them. After having taken tea and dined one day with Johnson, the latter proposed to him "to go up with him into his garret, which being accepted, he there found about five or six Greek folios, a deal writing desk, and a chair and a half. Johnson gave to his guest the entire seat, and tottered himself on one with only three legs and one arm."

Whether Mrs Johnson was living when Reynolds and Roubillac came together I cannot say, for she died at this house in Gough Square in March, 1752. That was four years after the couple settled down there, and the widower was terribly sad and disconsolate. But the scholar's room, so tersely and graphically pictured for us, obviously had not received a woman's attentions. No tidier or spring-cleaner had obtruded there. If Mrs Samuel Johnson lived, then she had been content to leave her husband's sanctum alone—the hall-mark of a good wife. I think she was chiefly domestic, though with some qualities of mind and character that had appealed to her youthful and ardent lover. We hardly hear of her alive. It is only after her death that we find in Johnson's diaries, never meant for our prying eyes, those pathetic references to her worth, and know how deep was his affection. She was always the "dear Tetty" of his lasting memory.

Samuel Johnson married when a young man of twenty-seven Mrs Elizabeth Porter, a widow. Her grown son was not pleased, but with the daughter, Lucy Porter, the stepfather appears always on the basis of most cordial relations. The bride is said spitefully to have been double the age of her groom, which is not true, but the stark fact is that she was in her forty-eighth year. She is said to have been a plain-featured person, but was not so in Johnson's admiring eyes. She had a little money.

That, I have seen it represented as though it were a matter of course, was the attraction to the poor scholar. Every fool can say as much; it is the measure, no doubt, of his own desires. Her little fortune was at most a few hundreds. Porter, a poor creature, had died insolvent. The guinea was, of course, then worth more than the gold piece to-day, if ever you chance to see one, and she did not pay £3 2s. 6d. a ton for coal or other fuel burnt in that great kitchen fireplace at Gough Square. The experienced Mrs Porter presumably could take care of her little money herself. Why not give Johnson the greater credit in his marriage?

David Garrick was Johnson's pupil in early days of wedlock, when he kept for a time a private academy, of which he soon tired. Garrick does

not flatter Mrs Johnson. He has described her as very fat, with swelled cheeks of a florid red, produced by thick painting, and increased by the liberal use of cordials. Flaring and fantastic dress, affectation both in speech and in general behaviour, are other elements in the portrait. This is savage, and, to my mind smacks of the extravagance of the theatre. Although to Garrick she was "a little painted puppet," Mrs Thrale speaks of a portrait of her seen at Lichfield as "very pretty, and very like."

Mrs Desmoulins, her companion at Hampstead when, in the Gough Square years, she retired there for a spell for reasons of health, tells of Mrs Johnson that she indulged herself in country air and nice living, and at an unsuitable expense, while her husband was drudging in the smoke of London —for London was smoky even then. She by no means, declared that lady, treated him with the complacency which is the most engaging quality in a wife. I call that merely spiteful.

The kindest appreciation of a sort of Mrs Johnson is by a lady, Miss Williams, that she had a good understanding and great sensibility, but was inclined to be satirical. Always, poor lady, she seems to have been the target of ill-natured criticism. But then she married at forty-eight.

Sam Johnson himself—and he, after all, most matters—was blind to all these shortcomings in his wife that were so obvious to others. In his eyes she was even beautiful. He wrote *The Rambler* in Gough Square, twice a week year in and year out by his own hand, for 208 numbers, receiving assistance only with four. It is a curious little sheet, expressing his thoughts on divers subjects. The week that Johnson's wife died the publication of *The Rambler* abruptly ceased. The shock seemed to have shattered his capacity for continuous work. His irritability of temper probably made him a difficult husband, and one can well imagine the lady suffered many trials. She got well home on that occasion when we are told she protested, "Nay, hold, Mr Johnson, and do not make a farce of thanking God for a dinner which in a few minutes you will protest is not eatable!" That he had real affection for her is manifest. Let me quote a single passage from his diary:

"This is the day on which, in 1752, dear Tetty died. I have now uttered a prayer of repentance and contrition; perhaps Tetty knows that I prayed for her. Perhaps Tetty is now praying for me. God help me!"

That was not the expression of pain of a widower newly bereft. It bears date March 28, 1782, thirty years after her death. Then he was a

sorely tried old man of seventy-three. There are others between, of which I give only this entry:

"April 23, 1753.—I know not whether I do not too much indulge the vain longings of affection; but I hope they intenerate my heart, and that when I die like my Tetty, this affection will be acknowledged in a happy interview, and that in the meantime I am incited by it to piety. I will, however, not deviate too much from common and received methods of devotion."

I will, with little fear of becoming wearisome in quotation, cite one other expression of Johnson's intimate thoughts, for it is useful in understanding his after life and solitude. It is the pathetic prayer that Boswell reverently copied, written on "April 26, 1752, being after 12 at night on the 25th"

"O Lord! Governor of heaven and earth, in whose hands are embodied and departed Spirits, if thou hast ordained the Souls of the Dead to minister to the Living, and appointed my departed Wife to have care of me, grant that I may enjoy the good effects of her attention and ministration, whether exercised by appearance, impulses, dreams, or in any other manner agreeable to thy Government. Forgive my presumption, enlighten my ignorance, and however meaner agents are employed, grant me the blessed influences of thy Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Johnson was a religious man. He had no longing for spooks. The old man waited for that happy interview with his wife after death, feeling,

he thought, her influence upon him in his solitary years. "I will take no more physic," he said when lying prostrate near the end, "not even my opiates; for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to God unclouded."

Johnson never married again. Ladies of my acquaintance have instanced that fact as proof of his constancy, an element in his character that redeems much of his gruffness and open rudeness —though these sides of him were shown to men alone. But I recall that it was Johnson also who said that "a second marriage is a triumph of hope over experience," which sounds worldly wise, though perhaps it is only empty sound. I will not set out the Latin epitaph that he placed over his wife's tomb in Bromley Church, but only record that, with a nice feeling which may surprise some of those who think of him only as uncivil and overbearing, he omitted all mention of the lady's age.

The Rambler I have alluded to. It is curious enough to recall that of the four numbers of the paper in which alone he received assistance, three were written by women, who were only beginning to feel their way with the pen at that time. He had the gift of making lasting friendships among women. Miss Catherine Talbot, who otherwise was published only posthumously,

wrote No. 30, and Nos. 44 and 100 of *The Rambler* were by Mrs Elizabeth Carter, Johnson's old friend of fifty years.

Johnson never was uncivil, never was overbearing to women. He prided himself upon his unvarying courtesy to them. There was, I know, one exception that will flash at once into mind. He wrote a rough, rude letter to Mrs Thrale at the time of her announcement to him of her contemplated marriage with Piozzi. It is best out—

"Madam (he wrote),—If I interpret your letter right, you are ignominiously married; if it is yet undone, let us talk once more together. If you have abandoned your children and your religion, God forgive your wickedness; if you have forfeited your fame and your country, may your folly do no further mischief. If the last act is yet to do, I, who have loved you, esteemed you, reverenced you, and served you, I, who long thought you the first of womankind, entreat that, before your fate is irrevocable, I may once more see you.

"I was, I once was, Madam, most truly yours,

SAM. JOHNSON."

He had no business to write that. It was not his concern. She had meant much in his solitary, restless, distressed old age. Five months after he had penned those lines he lay on his death-bed. She was his greatest, closest, most intimate friend. Obviously he was writing under stress of the most intense emotion, the shattering of a long-

established friendship that he knew, in his failing health and sorrowful years, could not be replaced. A gulf opened before the solitary old man that he had not the strength to look across, let alone to bridge. Such future as he should know seemed black before him. I do not condone the letter, but it is very human. Mrs Thrale replied to it with a dignity worthy of Johnson himself.

I have said, and I repeat, that Johnson prided himself on his courtesy to ladies. He was more than courteous, he was kind, and he was charitable beyond his means to those in affliction. When staying at Streatham he never failed to come once a week to Bolt Court to visit the extraordinary company of pensioners he maintained at his house there. The blind poetess, Miss Williams, had been among his earliest dependents. I never came across her poems, nor met one who had done so, but a poetess is her traditional reputation.

"He nursed," says Mrs Thrale in her exuberant style, "*whole nests* of people in his house, where the lame, the blind, the sick and the sorrowful always found a sure retreat from all the evils whence his little income could secure them; and commonly spending the middle of the week at our house, he kept his numerous family in Fleet Street upon a settled allowance; but returned to them every Saturday to give them three good dinners

and his company before he came back to us on the Monday night, treating them with the same, or perhaps more, ceremonious civility than he would have done by as many people of fashion." Such testimony many of us would like to have given of ourselves.

Nollekens' wife, herself a mean person, declared that "Dr Johnson has done more injury by that constant practice of his, of giving charity, as it is called, than he is aware of—and I shall take an opportunity of telling him so when I next see him at Sir John Hawkins's."

Johnson cherished the closest affection for his old mother. After finishing one monumental work, he wrote to Bennet Langton that, enjoying his new liberty, he thought of taking an excursion. Why not to the home of the Langtons in Lincolnshire? came the invitation. "I will give," he wrote in reply, "the true reason, which I know you will approve; I have a mother, more than eighty years old, who has counted the days to the publication of my book in hopes of seeing me; and to her I resolve to go." She died in his last year at Gough Square.

He could be a flatterer. That art he directed upon Mrs Charlotte Lennox, whose first novel, *Harriot Stuart*, came out in December, 1750 —that was in the Gough Square days—and

Johnson gave an entertainment in her honour. "The supper was elegant," writes Sir John Hawkins. "Johnson had directed that a magnificent hot apple pie should make a part of it, and this he would have stuck with bay-leaves, because, forsooth, Mrs Lennox was an authoress and had written verses; and, further, he had prepared for her a crown of laurel, with which, but not till he had invoked the Muses by some ceremonies of his own invention, he encircled her brows. About five Johnson's face shone with meridian splendour, though his drink had been only lemonade." They sat until daylight streamed in at the windows of the old Devil Tavern in Fleet Street, leaving at eight in the morning.

Johnson's attentions turned Mrs Lennox's head. "Nobody liked her," wrote Mrs Thrale.

It is Miss Reynolds who tells amusedly of Johnson's "nice observance" of ceremonious punctilios towards ladies. Never, she declares, would he suffer any lady to walk from his house to her carriage through Bolt Court or Johnson Court unattended by himself to hand her into it. If any obstacle prevented the vehicle from driving off, there he would stand in Fleet Street by the door of it. His familiar and uncouth figure would gather a mob around him; indeed, the people would collect the moment the famous Dr Johnson

appeared. The passages were long; the human mind had grasped Newton's theory of gravitation but had not invented the umbrella, and sometimes in the rain he got a ducking.

Once at Bolt Court his visitor was Mrs Siddons, the greatest of English actresses, and Johnson's servant Frank Barber, bustling about, could not immediately find a vacant chair for her in his untidy room. "You see, Madam," said Johnson majestically to his guest—"You see, Madam, wherever you go there are no seats to be had!"

His was a great courtesy. If clumsy at times, what matters? The will was there, and it is a poor spirit to smile only at the awkward performance. If to be gentle in your bearing towards ladies be the true stamp of a gentleman, then Samuel Johnson was a great gentleman. Perhaps with some few who read this I may have succeeded in placing Johnson at a new angle, for I am aware that, greatly as men appreciate that distinguished man of letters, with women the appreciation is less marked. They think mostly of his sledge-hammer style of knocking down an opponent in conversation, of his brusque language, and too often overbearing manner. They have thought him hard. Ladies I have known have dismissed him tersely as "a rude old man"

That he never was—to them.

XIV

A CARMELITE VAULT

MY greatest respect, unmixed with envy, goes out to Mr Smee (Messrs Gething and Co.), the possessor of this historic relic. His concern for its preservation equals my own. But neither he nor I will always be here to care for it, and both of us know how insatiable is the demand for space in this heart of newspaper land for ever more machinery. For heavy printing machines stable foundations must be found deep down, and once a newspaper proprietor comes into Brittons Court, Whitefriars Street, what chance of surviving has this tiny Carmelite vault?

It is the last link left with the great Carmelite Priory, which till the Reformation spread over all this land from Fleet Street to Thames-side. The Carmelite Church figures in Van der Wyngarde's sixteenth-century drawing of London, its conical pointed steeple distinguishing it from all others that crowd into the panorama. The churches of the religious Orders in London were enormous, each one built with the stateliness of a cathedral.

Of that of the Black Friars in its magnificence there is a reminder in Piers Plowman's *Vision*, its "gay glittering glas glowyng as the sun."

How many chance visitors, I wonder, to the Norman Church of St Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield, realize that all they see is but the chancel, transepts, and lady-chapel? The vast nave, wholly destroyed, stretched over all the burial ground to the little gateway before the open Smithfield, which is, in fact, a doorway of the original west front. The Carmelite Church was vast, too, its choir extending to the edge of Whitefriars Street, and its western end almost touched the Temple wall. In the cloistered settlement some hundreds of brothers lived, whose long white mantle, worn in public over the brown habit, made them the most familiar figures in Fleet Street till the dissolution of their London house in 1538. They were more familiar, indeed, than the gowned lawyers of the Temple. They numbered in their ranks great theologians, great scholars; they had a valuable library of written and printed books.

Friars White, Black, and Grey, Austin Friars—all have gone. Of the generous buildings of the Dominican Priory at Blackfriars, and of the Grey Friars at Newgate Street, not a stone remains above or below ground. There is of the Austin

Friars the nave of their church alone—now used by the Dutch Protestant community in London for their worship—and of the Carmelites only this little vault. The last has survived many perils. It escaped the despoilers of Henry VIII.'s reign, whose cupidity made away with so much else. The flames of the Great Fire of London burnt harmlessly over it. Alsatia's lawless bands, the most infamously notorious of Whitefriars' inhabitants, forbade to destroy it. By Fortune's favour it has come down to us to-day but little harmed.

For a time this friars' vault was lost, or completely forgotten. It was rediscovered in 1867, and again forgotten. Its re-emergence came about in curious fashion. To find Brittons Court you go from Fleet Street far down the slope of Whitefriars Street almost to the level land, and on the right-hand side is a little paved alley bearing this name. It leads nowhere. Four or five houses remain, some a couple of centuries old, enclosing the space completely save for the narrow entrance way. The Carmelite vault is beneath the paving of the court upon which you tread.

It chanced that in 1895 Mr Henry Lumley had instructions to sell this whole property. Investigations at No. 4 of the court took him into a dark cellar, which extended under the court

itself. It had been used for the storage of coal and wood after rubbish had nearly filled the space to the roof. A family named Hurrell then occupied the house as a dwelling. They had been there in successive generations full ninety years, and had some vague idea that this was a sort of uncanny cell, but were content not to inquire too curiously into its history. The grime and disorder could not conceal from an expert eye that here was fine masons' work. So on close examination it proved.

The vault is fourteenth-century. Entrance to it can only be obtained through the basement of No. 4 Brittons Court, in the wall of which is an opening about 2 feet in height. One scrambles through without difficulty, and soon disappears in the darkness. No light penetrates from the outer world, but the flame of a candle gives sufficient illumination. The first view fills one with complete surprise. The vault is square, measuring only 12 feet 3 inches on each side.

Blocks of hard chalk form the walls, and they have preserved through all the centuries their original whiteness. They glisten in the candle-light. Eight moulded ribs, of a dark stone, stretch across like a spider's web, meeting in a carved rose in the centre. The roof forms a dome, the ribs rising from the same springing level all around. Into the south-east side a corner of a

CARMELITE VAULT AT WHITEFRIARS

dwelling-house projects, for which purpose one of the ribs has been cut away and another shortened. This is the only mutilation the little chamber has undergone, save that a coal shaft has been cut through the fourteenth-century chalk, closed by a Victorian iron plate in the pavement. It is a typically English touch.

One can just stand upright on the floor now made, but it has been excavated down. A brick floor was first disclosed, then another layer of rubbish, then a tiled floor—possibly the original one—and beneath this a bed of mortar resting upon clay. Some fragments of pottery and glass and a few other objects came to light on a careful sifting of the rubbish. An ancient doorway, still existing in the west wall (and shown in the photograph) was thought to give access to some subterranean passage, possibly extending to the Temple. It is sufficiently accounted for as the exterior entrance to the vault, and originally the only one.

What purpose this vault served must remain a matter of speculation. It is too far south on the Priory ground to have been any part of the church. It stands clear of the buildings about the cloister—one of the cloister walks trodden by the White Friars survives in Ashentree Court, to-day a dead end. It has been conjectured by

Mr A. W. Clapham, who, with painstaking industry and learning, has reconstructed the plan of the Priory, that this relic is the under-croft of the Prior's lodging. That, for various reasons, is probable. The crown of the vault lies about 2 feet 6 inches below the paved court.

Little can London show to-day of the four great Orders of Mendicant Friars. They played a large part in London's story, and their work among the dregs of the city's population, the outcasts of humanity—squalid, leprous, lost—lightens the dark records of the poor throughout the mediæval ages. That with acquired wealth they fell into disrepute is nothing strange; others have done the same, religious and laymen alike. We should keep and treasure this little relic of them that time has spared to the City of London. One great newspaper proprietor I know, revering old historical things in London, in whose hands the Carmelite Vault would be safe if ever his premises should extend this way, but the greatest of news magnates are no more immortal than are Mr Smee and myself.

It should be possible in any future scheme of reconstruction to build right around Brittons Court, and still to leave the little vault undisturbed where it has been these past five centuries and more. But I should like to see the Ancient

Monuments Commission mark this building down for preservation. In the City Corporation as caretaker of those things it ought as a first duty to guard I have small confidence. The City's past record is nothing short of deplorable.

XV

TOMBSTONE STORIES

WE have lost the art of sepulchral inscription. "Gladstone," a name and a date on the pedestal of a marble figure, "Charles Dickens" on a plain flat tombstone—that suffices to-day. I am confident that posterity will be the poorer for our presumptuous reticence. Of course, we attribute it to greater modesty, that fine element in our nature which makes repellent any imitation of the fulsome adulation of the epitaph upon the dead favoured by our ancestors.

But is not our vanity actually greater than theirs? They sought, within the limitations of language at their command, often in halting phrase, often, it is true, descending to mere bathos, to express the virtues of the dead they commemorated. Their merits should be figured in lasting stone. We, on our part, assume that all future ages will know those virtues, and that a name alone is enough to recall them.

Assuredly the greater vanity is ours.

So when through shadowed cathedral or historic abbey or homely parish church the curious visitor passes, with eyes open for all that is of interest, it is the old monuments and the old epitaphs that he searches out. So I feel confident will the visitor to these our shrines centuries hence, passing by our own, with their poor labels, meagre as if intended for objects in museums. We thus defeat our purpose by our shortsightedness. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, I agree—and if in pursuit of that end licence should overlay truth, history will correct it, or oblivion pardon all.

The proudest epitaph conceived by man was surely that of Bacon for himself, which never was cut in stone. "My memory I leave to the charitable speeches of mankind, to foreign nations, and to the next age." August simplicity both of thought and phrase is there. The words are written in his will, declaring his confidence that the achievements of his life would outlast the deep shadows amidst which his career closed.

I have found amusement for an idle hour in books of epitaphs from country churches and graveyards which laborious collectors of these genres have compiled—the country, of course. London is always big enough to be overlooked. There must be a great bulk of them in this

metropolis awaiting harvest. In perambulations of the City and Westminster I have at times jotted down a few, mostly those which recall some historic episode or personality.

A murder in Pall Mall is not the sort of subject one would expect to find chosen for representation with the funeral urn. In Westminster Abbey, too, of all places. Look into the Abbey, in the south aisle of the great nave. There, on the blatant memorial of Thomas Thynne, is the thing pictured. "Tom of Ten Thousand"—he was vulgarly rich, and the popular sobriquet indicates how his contemporaries thought of him. That, I imagine, alone accounts for the sepulchral honours granted. Looking back over two and a half centuries, the matter that his life was violently shortened does not seem cause for regret. Rochester's lines one recalls—

> "Who'd be a wit in Dryden's cudgel'd skin,
> Or who'd be rich and senseless like Tom ——?"

Thynne, a Wiltshire Member of Parliament, was himself embroiled in violent courses. His private marriage, in somewhat scandalous circumstances, with Lord Ogle's widow, the heiress of the Percy estates, brought to him repeated challenges from Count Königsmark, himself an unsuccessful suitor. Thynne refused to fight, and is

credited with having sent six men to the Continent to murder both the Count and his second. Königsmark, failing to secure a meeting, hired the services of three ruffians. They stopped Thynne's coach in Pall Mall, and one of them shot him with a blunderbuss through the window, opening a huge wound from which he quickly died. Political capital was made out of the crime, which figures largely in the records of Charles II.'s later years. The Duke of Monmouth, whose partisan and "wealthy western friend" Thynne was, had left the coach but a few minutes before.

The spot was where Waterloo Place meets Pall Mall immediately before the United Services Club of to-day, and there three of the assassins—Vratz, Stern, and Boroski, all foreigners—were publicly hanged. It was made plain before their despatch that they knew their quarry well enough, and were not after Monmouth. Count Königsmark, who was captured when endeavouring to fly the country, himself went free, thanks largely to Court influence. The coach, the horsed murderers, the blunderbuss being fired, all are carefully sculptured in marble. The coachman had a son, a Welsh farmer, whose boast it afterwards was that his father's monument was to be seen in Westminster Abbey. A long inscription was written, intended to have recorded the event in

detail, but Dean Sprat vetoed this for the few plain words that appear above the recumbent figure:

"THOMAS THYNN
of Long Leate in Com Wilts, Esq.
who was Barbarously Murdered on
Sunday the 12th of February
168½"

St Swithin's Church, in Cannon Street, is of unique interest, for embedded in its exterior wall is the historical London Stone. Fixed to a pier within is a monument some 10 feet high, which bears this inscription:

"Near this place lyes interr'd ye body of Mr. MICHAEL GODFREY, Merchant, late of this Parish, Son of Mr. MICHAEL GODFREY, Merchant, and ANNE MARY his Wife. He was borne Febr. the 22d. A.D. 1658. Being Elected the first Deputy-Governour of the Banck of England, he went for Flanders on some important business, relating to the service of his MAIESTY: Where attending his Royal Person, then incamp'd
before NAMUR, He was slayn by a Cannon-ball from the Workes of the Beseiged July ye 17th. 1695. He dyed a Batchelour, much lamented by all his Friends, Relations, and Acquaintance, for his Integrity, his Knowledge, and the
Sweetness of his Manners. His Body was brought over, and lyes buried near his Father's.
His sorrowful Mother and Executrix caused this Monument
to be Erected to the Pious Memory
of her Beloved Son."

Namur won new significance in these recent years of war, King William III.'s siege of that formidable fortress being almost forgotten. Michael Godfrey was a co-venturer with Paterson in the establishment of the Bank of England in 1694; and often, too, it is forgotten that that strongest commercial institution that the world has ever seen arose out of a loan of £1,200,000 advanced for carrying on the war in Flanders, the lenders receiving, with 8 per cent. interest, incorporation and the right of trading in bills of exchange, bullion, and forfeited pledges.

Godfrey, the first Deputy-Governor, and two others had crossed to Belgium to establish a branch in Antwerp for the coining of money with which to pay the troops. Arrived before Namur, Godfrey was invited by the King to take dinner in his tent, and thereafter he went into the trenches, attracted by that irresistible curiosity which would compel most of us in like circumstances to see how war was envisaged at close quarters. William noticed him there among the officers of his Staff with surprise and anger.

"Mr Godfrey," he said, "you ought not to run these hazards; you are not a soldier; you can be of no use to us here."

"Sir," answered Godfrey, "I run no more hazard than your Majesty."

"Not so," said William; "I am where it is my duty to be; and I may without presumption commit my life to God's keeping; but you——"

A cannon-ball from the ramparts at that moment laid Godfrey dead at the King's feet. It may be added to what is told by the inscription at St Swithin's that fear of being "Godfreyed"—such was during some time the cant phrase, akin to our own "Stellenbosched" of the Boer War—did not prevent idle gazers from coming to the trenches. Though King William forbade his English coachmen, footmen, and cooks to expose themselves, he repeatedly saw them skulking near the most dangerous spots and trying to get a peep at the fighting. Sometimes, it was said, he was provoked into horse-whipping them out of the range of the French guns of the fortress. Adventure will out in our blood, and none need regret it.

St Swithin's Church in the City, by the way, is the only London dedication to the rainy Saint.

Sadder than any other memorial stone I know is the prettily designed Woodmason tablet in the church of St Peter, Cornhill. High up on the south wall of the chancel, it is unfortunately so placed that none can read its tale of woe, but the

kind wife of the Rev G. Bell Doughty, the vicar, has sent me the inscription, which I give here, having brought together some of the very short lines:

'James,		born	20 June	1773
Mary,		,,	28 Aug.	1774
Charles,		,,	17 Feb.	1776
Harriot,		,,	10 March	1777
George,		,,	30 Jan.	1778
John Eliz	twins	,,	22 March	1779

The WHOLE OFFSPRING of
JAMES and MARY WOODMASON
In the same awful Moment of the 18 Jan 1782
TRANSLATED
By sudden and irresistible Flame
In the late Mansion of their sorrowing Parents
From the Sleep of Innocence to
ETERNAL BLISS
Their remains collected from the Ruins
Are here combined.
A sympathising Friend of the bereaved Parents, their Companion through the night of the 18 Jan, in a scene of Distress beyond the Powers of Language, perhaps of Imagination
Devotes this spontaneous Tribute of the
Feelings of his Mind to the
Memory of Innocence
I.H.C."

The fire occurred in the parents' house in Leadenhall Street. That day being the Queen's birthday, a magnificent ball was given at St

James's Palace in honour of the anniversary. Mr Woodmason and his wife were among the guests, and the former was called out only to learn that in his absence all his children had been consumed in the flames. Mr Isaac Heard, Clarenceaux King of Arms (afterwards Sir Isaac Heard, Garter King), was with the bereaved parents when the sorrowful news was broken to them, and it was he who raised this touching memorial to the seven children in St Peter's Church. This deplorable occurrence was deeply felt by the Royal Family, some of whom visited the scene.

Several other persons also perished. In this one accidental fire in a City merchant's dwelling-house more persons lost their lives than in the flames of the Great Fire of London.*

A plain stone tablet is fixed on the north cloister wall of Westminster Abbey, with the old lettering of King James I.'s reign deeply cut. It has held my attention as I have wandered about that famous pile, searching for new joys, rarely being disappointed. Of Lawrence I know nothing

* W. G. Bell, *The Great Fire of London in 1666*. Why should not an author occasionally honour his own works with quotation? It is his only method of showing his appreciation.

except what is gained from his stone, but as so early an exemplar of their craft he should be a worthy among the legions of shorthand writers of to-day. Thus are his homely merits set out:

" With Diligence and trvst most exemplary
Did William Lavrence serve a Prebendary
And for his Paines now past before not lost
Gaind this Remembrance at his Masters cost.
O Read these lines againe yov seldome find
A Servant faithfvll and a Master Kind
Short Hand he wrot his flowre in Prime did fade
And Hasty Death Short Hand of him hath made
Well covth he nvmbers and well mesvrd Land
Thus doth he now that grovnd wheron you Stand
Wherein he lyes so geometricall
Art maketh some but thvs will Natvre all
Obit Decemb. 28 1621
Aetitas svae 29——"

The Boar's Head in Eastcheap had great fame among London taverns. Shakespeare and Burbage and Ben Jonson are said to have used it when crossing to the theatres on Bankside, and when returning after the play. It is indicated by Shakespeare (the name appears only in the later folios) as the scene of the drunken debaucheries of Sir John Falstaff and his noisy dependents, Bardolph and Pistol, when Dame Quickly kept the reckoning, and of Doll Tearsheet's frailties. The statue of King William IV., looking from the

centre of the street towards London Bridge, at this moment (it was threatened with removal) stands a few yards east of the tavern site. The Boar's Head was consumed in the Great Fire of London, was rebuilt, and long after flourished, till finally its roystering trade went elsewhere, and it last figured as a gun-maker's shop.

A link with the famous tavern remains to us. You find it at St Magnus the Martyr, but not within the church. It is hidden away in that little dreary plot of paved court by the side which was part of the churchyard, where seldom visitors go. There, against the wall, is this headstone, commemorating some simple virtues:

"Here lieth the Body of Robert Preston,
late Drawer at the Boar's-head Tavern
in Great Eastcheap, who departed this life
March the 16, Anno Dom 1730
Aged 27 Years.

Bacchus to give the Toping World Surprize
Produced one Sober Son, and here he lies,
Tho nurs'd among full Hogsheads, he defyd
The charms of Wine and ev'ry vice beside.
O Reader, if to Justice thou'rt inclin'd,
Keep Honest Preston daily in thy mind.
He drew good Wine, took care to fill his Pots,
Had sundry virtues that outweig'd his faults.
You that on Bacchus have the like dependance,
Pray copy Bob in Measure and Attendance."

Cherubs, a death's head, and vases form the curious ornamentation of the stone. I hold that this interesting stone ought to be brought under cover, for protection against weather and decay.

The greatest of the dead who after life's fitful fever sleep in the church of St Peter ad Vincula, within The Tower, have no monuments, and their graves till recent years were unmarked. This stone there to a worthy Master Gunner of England is curious as containing his name in acrostic. Captain Valentine Pyne, son of George Pyne, of Curry Mallet, in the County of Somerset, gent.—I summarize his lengthy inscription—following the footsteps of his father, in loyalty and obedience to his Sovereign, trailed a pike, serving in the ranks under his sire, in the expedition at Calais in the year 1625, and in that of the Isle of Rhee two years later. After that he betook himself to his Majesty's Fleet, served at sea till the Civil War, and in that rebellion fought for the King on land. After Charles I.'s execution at Whitehall, he voluntarily followed the command of Prince Rupert for the space of fifteen years, at sea and in the wars of Germany, "till his now Majesty's happy Restoration."

Always a fighter, the gallant old soldier took command of some of the Navy's ships in the first

war against the Dutch. Charles II. had the grace to recompense this faithful Royalist with the appointment of Master Gunner of England. In that capacity he departed this life (which he led single) in April, 1677. His glowing epitaph reads:

"**V**ndaunted hero, whose aspiring mind,
As being not willing here to be confin'd,
Like birds in cage, in narrow trunk of clay,
Entertain'd Death, and with it soar'd away.
Now he is gone, why should I not relate
To future age, his valour, fame, and fate?
I ust, loyal, prudent, faithful; such was he,
Nature's accomplished, World's epitome.
P roud he was not; and tho' by riches try'd,
Y et virtue was his safe, his surest guide.
N or can devouring Time his rapid jaws
E'er eat away those actions he made laws."

St Dunstan's, Fleet Street, youngest of the City churches, has many monuments rich in interest, preserved from the older fabric destroyed nearly a century ago. Among them is an oval tablet to Alexander Layton, "ye famed Swordman," raised by an admiring pupil of the fencing master, with the couplet beneath—

"His Thrusts like Lightning flew, more Skilful Death
Parr'd 'em all, and beat him out of breath."

Layton taught fencing in tumultuous days when swords flashed readily from their scabbards for

King or Parliament, and lived in old age till 1677. This other inscription, on a round marble tablet on the wall of one of the bays, without ornament, I like better:

"To the Memory
of HOBSON JUDKIN, Esq.,
late of Clifford's Inn,
The Honest Solicitor
who departed this life June the 30, 1812.
This tablet was erected by his Clients
as a Token of Gratitude and Respect for his
honest, faithful, and friendly conduct to them
thro' life.
Go Reader and imitate
HOBSON JUDKIN."

A quaint fancy, that. It recalls the memorial inscription which Pennant found in the neighbouring Rolls Chapel, now demolished, in Chancery Lane—"Here lies an honest lawyer—that is STRANGE." Hobson Judkin's old firm still survives, a century after, in Messrs Watson, Sons and Room, Solicitors, of Bouverie Street, E.C.

From these mild jokers at expense of the lawyers—always considered a safe butt for witticisms—I pass on to a professed comedian. Fixed on the wall of the south staircase of St Clement Danes Church, in the Strand, you find this inscribed stone:

Sacred
to the memory of
HONEST JOE MILLER
who was a tender husband
and a sincere friend; a facetious companion
and an excellent comedian.
Who departed this life
The fifteenth day of August 1738,
Aged 56 years.
If humour wit and honesty could save
The humourous witty honest from the grave,
The grave had not so soon this tenant found,
Whom honesty and wit and humour crowned.
Could but esteem and love preserve our breath,
And guard us longer from the stroke of death,
The stroke of death on him had later fell,
Whom all mankind esteemed and loved full well.
From respect to sound worth
Mirthful qualities and histrionic excellence
Commemorated by poetic talent in humble life
The Above inscription
Which time had nearly obliterated
has been preserved
And transferred to this stone by order of
A.D. 1816. JERVIS BUCK, CHURCH WARDEN."

Joe Miller's Jests is a book no longer read, but his name has survived it. Curious, I called for a copy at the British Museum (no ordinary library seems now to keep it) and found it both stale and unprofitable. Joe Miller enjoyed a well-earned reputation as an actor at Drury Lane Theatre for five-and-twenty years, and some standing as a wit, but his posthumous fame

therefor is mostly the gift of his editors. His *Jest Book* when first issued after his death contained 247 quips. Only a leaven of these were his, others having been collected from all sorts of sources. Long after he lay beyond power of pen and ink, successive editors added others with each new edition, fathering all on the ancestral Joe Miller, till a New York reprint, the thirteenth, some fifty years ago gave no fewer than 1,286 witticisms. So may reputations grow with time.

Miller lived in Clare Market throughout his theatrical career, and dying there was buried in St. Clement's outlying graveyard in Portugal Street. King's College Hospital was built upon the abandoned graveyard in 1852, and the monument, says the *Dictionary of National Biography*, was then finally destroyed. That, no doubt, has been the case with the original stone, but here in St Clement Danes in the Strand is the one that replaced it a century ago, preserving the epitaph which Stephen Duck wrote for him.

I like best the story told of Joe Miller's selection of a bride. Being illiterate himself, his principal object was to have a wife who was able to read his parts at the theatre to him.

Last I go out to the open air. Bream's Buildings is a way between Chancery Lane and Fetter

Lane, and there, opposite the Birkbeck College, is a fragment of the additional graveyard of St Dunstan-in-the-West parish. Long since it was disused, and close to the iron railing, on ground raised level with the eye, is a little square stone whereon is inscribed this:

"Here sleeps our babes in silence heavns thaire rest
For God takes soonest those he loveth best
Samewell Marshall the 2d sonne of
Edward Marshall and of Anne his wife
Dyed May 27, 1631, aged two yeares
Anne Marshall their first daur dyed 21
of June 1635 aged one yeare 9 moneths
Nicholas Marshall their third sonne dyed
Decr 5th. 1635 Aged 5 yeares 6 moneths"

"They die young whom the gods love." Note the date; it is in King Charles I.'s troubled reign. It calls one back to distant days of Cavaliers and Roundheads. The great newspaper press which groans unceasingly day and night, and has transformed the neighbourhood, had not yet come into its own when the sorrowing parents laid their children for their last long sleep in this then quiet corner.

Who was Edward Marshall? Was he Parliament man, as were the bulk of the Londoners, or was his sword for King Charles in the storm that was soon to burst over the country? Time has blotted out all save his name. Anne, too. But

generations of printers, men and lads passing by, have stopped to read the simple lines of this headstone, telling a tale of loss which after nearly three centuries' lapse makes its appeal with undiminished freshness to our common humanity.

POSTSCRIPT.—A glance, looking around me as I walked hurriedly about the great spaces of Westminster Abbey, after this paper was closed, and, indeed, the proofs passed, seemed to tell that my opening fears concerning our modern poverty in epitaph were all wrong. This simple stone, commemorating a great name among all those illustrious dead, was at my feet—

XVI

THE APOTHECARIES' COMPANY

IT is pleasant and cheering in these days to find an ancient City Company so closely identified with the practice of its craft as is the Society of Apothecaries. Were I honoured by invitation to the freedom of the Livery Company of, say, the Bowyers of London, or of the Armourers, that I should appreciate, but it would occasion some embarrassment. Little opportunity has come my way to bend the English yew, nor is the heavy weight of steel armour for my figure.

These warlike trades, and others equally remote, you will find named among the great fraternity of City Companies, and I would not see lost a single one of them. In the words of the toast honoured in the halls, "Skinners and Merchant Taylors—Merchant Taylors and Skinners—root and branch, may they flourish for ever."

They are links back in a long chain of events, reminding us by their titles what an old historic City this London is; counting its age by centuries when Harold's footmen stood close on the hill at

Hastings; of ancient renown and fame when the English archers loosened their flight of arrows at Poictiers; rooted in a dim antiquity when the appearance of the first knight in a complete suit of plate armour no doubt was hailed by the Londoners of that day as a novelty, like as to ourselves is the K motor omnibus in the London streets. We have the same streets; Cheapside and Bucklersbury, along which Harold's foot soldiers may have marched to the bridge and into Kent; Fleet Street, trodden by the mailed feet of Knights Templars, leaving their riverside settlement for the Crusades in Palestine; Smithfield, the scene of many a Royal and gorgeous joust before its after reputation came by the Marian burnings.

The grim fortress of the Tower of London keeps still that sentinel guard by the river which it has kept for now eight hundred and forty years.

Some among these City Companies go back to Poictiers; it has even been conjectured that some fellowship of trades existed in the London of Earl Harold, and may have given to it that strength of community which William the Conqueror sought to win over, not to destroy. The Apothecaries is not among the Companies of such ancient foundation, for till the Scottish King James I. came to the English throne its members

were incorporated with the Grocers, and far back, before the Grocers were so styled, these tradesmen last named were the Pepperers—the Gilda Pipariorum is mentioned in the Great Roll of the Pipe as early as the year 1180. So for my apothecary friends I have not so ancient an historical sense as I have for the tradesman from whom I buy my pepper.

Physicians and Barber-Surgeons there were in King James I.'s time, as well as grocers, who then sold healing drugs. The insistency of King James in separating the apothecaries from the grocers was, and is, a little puzzling. Quite true, many of the leading apothecaries sought it. They were supported in that demand by two doctors of eminence, Sir Theodore de Mayerne and Henry Atkins, James's "discreet and faithful Physicians." Gideon de Laune, the Queen's Apothecary, was also a suitor. But the Society of Apothecaries, though torn apart from the Grocers, took away none of the Grocers' endowments. It had a name and a Royal Charter, but no property. It had to find funds with which to begin. Many Apothecaries, thrifty men, objected to charges thus forced upon their trade, and went so far as to petition the King to destroy the charter and reunite them with the Grocers.

James would hear nothing of the sort. Of the

evils to be remedied, the charter itself bore witness—

"That in these latter Years very many Empiricks and unskilful and ignorant Men, and unexperienced, do inhabit and abide in our City of London, and the Suburbs of the same, which are not well instructed in the Art and Mystery of Apothecaries, but are therein unskilful, and rude, do make and compound many unwholesome, hurtful, deceitful, corrupt, and dangerous Medicines, and the same do sell into many parts of this our Kingdom of England, and the same do daily transmit, to the abuse and scandal not only of them which embrace the knowledge of Physic, and of the learned Physicians of this our Realm of England, professing the same, and of the Apothecaries of our City of London, being educated and expert in the same Art and Mystery, but also to the great peril and daily hazard of the Lives of our Subjects."

These phrases are the commonplaces of Royal Charters, and well may exaggerate the peril in which the citizens stood from poison. When, at the instigation of the Grocers, the City authorities delayed enrolment of the charter, the King sent his peremptory orders to the Lord Mayor; and that King James, albeit "the wisest fool in Christendom," was justified in his foresight, and the recalcitrants were not, three centuries of experience bear ample witness.

The early years are somewhat vague. The Apothecaries had obtained complete power over distillation of all kinds, but twenty years later

the distillers claimed, and won, separation, setting up their own Company. This the Apothecaries opposed, tooth and nail, alleging manifold and dangerous abuses by inexpert and criminous distillers; incidentally, that the ingredients of their distillations were principally the emptyings of brewers' vessels, droppings of alewives' taps, and washings of beer hogsheads, "which they call a low wine," adding thereto spices, seeds and herbs, and "dulcifying it with the refuse or dross of sugar fit only for hogs' treacle." This I learn from Mr Barrett's *History of the Society of Apothecaries*, and regret grows that there was not a native journalism by this time, for assuredly it would have been lively.

The Apothecaries at the outset had dispensed and sold medicines only. Before the century which had witnessed the grant of the charter in 1617 was out, they were also prescribing. The Society had beaten back repeated attacks by the Grocers' Company, the City authorities, and a section of its body, but found in the College of Physicians resourceful opponents. These took up a domineering attitude, claimed oversight of the Apothecaries' doings—in brief, acted the part of much superior persons, justified by their learning and reputation. Naturally the physicians (their College was of Henry VIII.'s foundation)

objected to upstart rivals in their own domain of healing.

A long war of pamphlets waged, to which Dr Garth's cheerfully venomous verse in the *Dispensary* contributed—

> "Nigh where Fleet Ditch descends in sable streams,
> To wash his sooty Naiads in the Thames,
> There stands a structure on a rising hill,
> Where tyros take their freedom out to kill."

That was written of Apothecaries' Hall. Dryden assailed the body in lines like these—

> "The Apothecary tribe is wholly blind.
> From files a random recipe they take,
> And many deaths from one prescription make.
> Garth, generous as his Muse, prescribes and gives;
> The shopman sells, and by destruction lives."

After the pamphleteers, the lawyers' aid was invoked. Life was strenuous for the pill-makers. But the stout London Apothecaries held their own. To-day the Society of Apothecaries not only examines candidates qualifying to compound and dispense drugs, but it is one of the three great medical licensing bodies for England and Wales. It conducts the examinations of the Conjoint Board in its own hall, from which issue fully qualified and licensed general practitioners. That is a proud position for a City Company to have won, and stands for evidence of its continued usefulness.

In old days of Nelson's and Wellington's wars, Apothecaries' Hall made big money by providing drugs for the fleets and armies. Individual members of the Company raised the capital funds for the purpose—the "stock," as it was called—and themselves took the profits. In the greater war of 1914 to 1918, the Apothecaries' Company played a patriotic and useful part in compounding large quantities of drugs for the fighting forces, but long before that time the private co-partnership had been abandoned. The Company still, as a corporate body, trades under its three-centuries-old charter, and anyone among the public may go to the shop beneath the shadow of the Hall in Water Lane, Blackfriars, and there purchase pure drugs, expertly compounded.

The Hall was finished about 1671, replacing that destroyed in the Great Fire of London. It is one of the few City Companies' Halls of the period that have not been tampered with by renovations, save that on the exterior the stucco fiend has pursued his noisome work, covering all the brick. I never have understood the stucco delusion; a madness seems to have seized upon our people, misleading them to prefer sham to honesty—the appearance of sham stone to honest brick, and its most awful example is in the Tower of London, where the timber frames and gables of

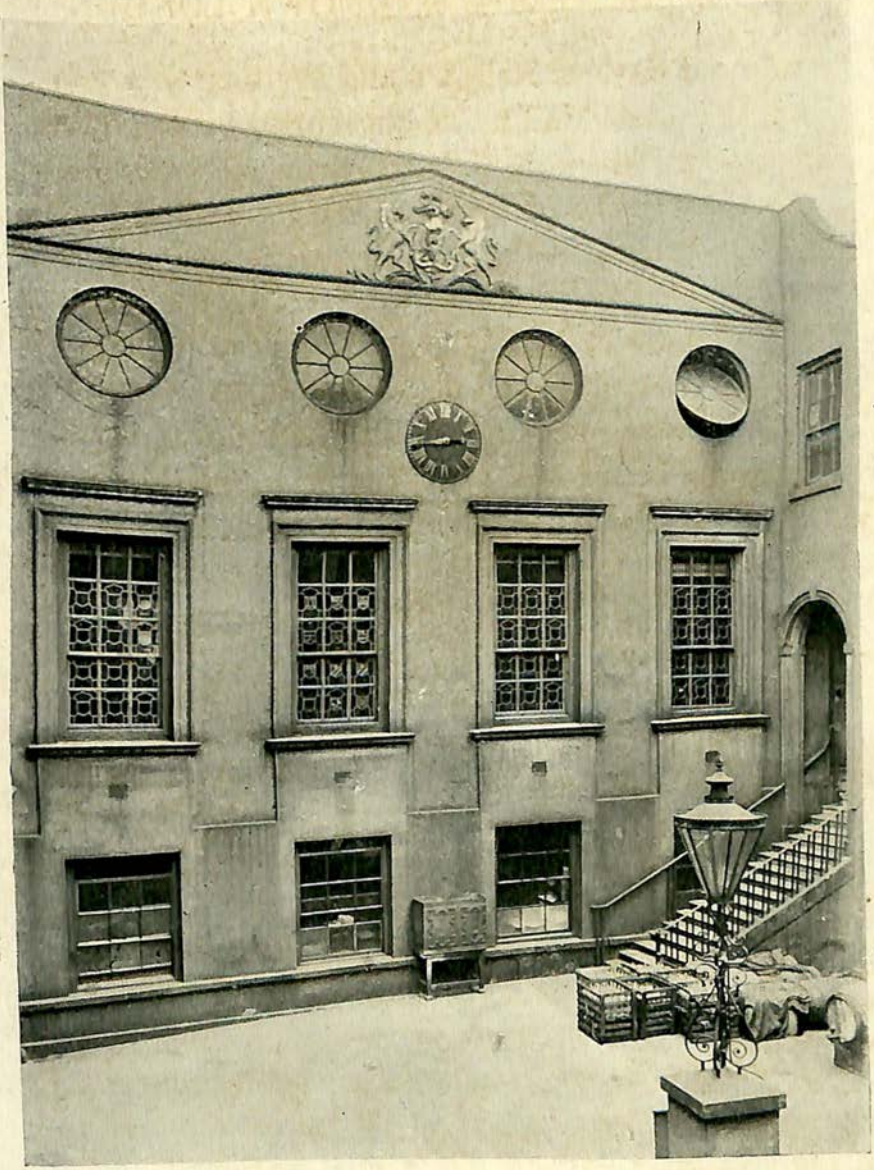


Photo. by Mr. Lionel Gowing

APOTHECARIES HALL, BLACKFRIARS

Henry VIII.'s Lieutenant's Lodgings were stucco covered, and partly are so still!

For more reasons than good preservation, Apothecaries' Hall, at Blackfriars, is well worth a visit. No architect is named in the records, and who designed the buildings grouped around the four sides of the open quadrangle none can now hope to tell. Whoever he was, he had good knowledge of his craft. The Great Hall is spacious and lofty, with an ornamented ceiling, lighted by tall windows with circular openings above them. A handsome wooden screen, with the Apothecaries' arms boldly carved, is at one end, and a minstrels' gallery is raised high at the other.

The only relic saved from the Great Fire stands in the hall, the marble bust of Gideon de Laune. This dour old gentleman, wearing a square beard, became Master; and generally he has the credit of having founded the Company, though surely that belongs rather to the two physicians previously mentioned. Portraits on the walls include those of the monarchs, James I., Charles I., William and Mary, and Queen Anne, throughout whose reigns the Company grew in reputation and prosperity.

The pictures that hold my fancy more strongly than these are in the adjoining Court Room, a

square apartment, finely proportioned and panelled up to the ceiling, that it would be a delight for any literary man to work in. Especially I covet an unfinished portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds of the great anatomist John Hunter, here seen in a thoughtful pose with his elbow resting on a table. It would seem unpardonable to wish more work done on the head itself, a perfect example of Sir Joshua's art. There is, too, a fine head on panel of James I., his black hat ornamented with jewels, and with jewelled chain and lace collar, with many portraits of worthy Apothecaries, some among them of outstanding distinction.

The poet Keats was granted the L.S.A. (Licentiate Society Apothecaries) diploma at Apothecaries' Hall on July 25, 1816, and there hangs in the Court Room his portrait, with an original abstract from the candidates' entry book of that date, giving particulars of his apprenticeship, attendance at lectures, and hospital practice.

They have a heavy oaken balustered staircase, by which the visitor ascends to the Great Hall, and higher to the upper rooms. You will hardly credit that, till a few years ago, this fine structure was completely fenced off—to keep out draughts was, I believe, the excuse. Better counsels have prevailed, and to-day it is seen in full majesty.

The ample library, now under the care of Dr Bramley Taylor, and one of the best for *Materia Medica* in existence, began with the gift in 1633 of a single volume of Gerard's *Herbal*. Before leaving the Great Hall itself, notice there the muniment chest, bearing date 1668, and the gift of William Clarke, composed of six chestnut planks of great size, and decorated with brass studs, heavy bronze handles, and an ornate key scutcheon. It has the original lock. Notice also the banners, or streamers, lending a patch of fading colour to the Hall. Originally they floated from the Company's State Barge when it escorted the Lord Mayor on the Thames, or the journey was made by water to the Physick Garden at Chelsea.

That Physick Garden is at Chelsea still. For two centuries and more the Apothecaries' Company held it; in 1683 they planted there four cedars, two of which within memory were conspicuous by the riverside to all who passed in boats; from branches of these the three chairs for the Master and Wardens were made. The garden in its day, under a succession of able gardeners, performed a useful service to medical science, but other resources have arisen at Kew and Regent's Park in the changing years, and at the close of last century the utility of this possession to the Company was less noticeable than the cost of its

upkeep. It is to-day maintained by the London Parochial Charities trustees, and is used by students of botany, all residents of Chelsea being heartily thankful that in this ample space Nature has been left undisturbed.

Apothecaries' Hall escaped the air raids, though missiles fell thereabouts, and the careful Clerk, Mr Bingham Watson, has left on record for future generations of the craft all that happened to, and all that was done by, the ancient Company in the Great War. I have wished that the Clerk during the Great Plague of 1665 had done as much.

The Apothecaries' Company performs a useful task unostentatiously, being little in the public eye, and is secure in the position and esteem which many generations of masters of the craft have built up. It has never been worldly rich. I like the apothecaries the better because they fought their way. The pestle, well used, is a serviceable weapon.

XVII

LONDON "OUT OF BOUNDS"

MEN amongst us who are of middle age will remember there were maps of English counties that as children they were set to draw which were oddly comprised. Bits thrown out, so to speak, gave to the coloured sheet a speckled appearance—bits of Lincolnshire, coloured brown, thrown into yellow Cambridgeshire, and of green Derbyshire left over its border in red Yorkshire. Westmorland had quite a lot of these detached bits among her fells. They were *disjecta membra*, odd fragments of counties of no ordered size or plan, somehow or other left embedded in neighbouring counties. Then came a Local Government Act of a date that I don't profess to remember, but assuredly drafted by someone who had a soft place in his heart for schoolboys, which simplified the geography of England by compacting each county into an indivisible whole.

If I tell you that for centuries there was a bit of London that was not London, but Cambridge-

shire, and not only a bit of London, but by the very heart of it—the City—you may believe that I am romancing. It was so, and after it ceased to be Cambridgeshire it became a sort of little Crown Colony, self-governed, living apart from its vast neighbour London in which it was embosomed. It knew no London tax-collector, and any of that breed, I imagine, would have had but short shrift had he ventured to call with a blue paper. This curious arrangement continued in force till the last Local Government Act, well within memory, which swept the privileged precinct into the vast network of the metropolis.

Of course, there is a story in it, which had its origin in those days long ago when the Church and various religious Orders possessed as their own no inconsiderable part of London, and a bishop within the boundaries of his residence retained his jurisdiction as in his own diocese, exempt from civil interference.

This outland is Ely Place, off Holborn, a quiet byway by Hatton Garden as you take the rise of the hill to Holborn Circus, and familiar at least to newspaper readers as the quarters of a firm of solicitors famous in many a *cause célèbre* in the Law Courts. Messrs Lewis and Lewis's offices occupy a large part of one side. Ely Place leads nowhere. It has a gate on

Holborn, very likely unnoticed, as it is always open in the daylight hours. It has also a beadle's box, and at times the passer-by may catch a glimpse of the uniformed official who occupies this last. His importance is emphasized by his gold-laced hat. The City stretches along by Holborn as far as the fine old timbered front of Staple Inn, where a stone obelisk marks the boundary, and there is a companion obelisk opposite by Gray's Inn Road.

Ely Place still lives within itself so far as it is allowed to, proudly retiring, as if hurt in dignity by the intrusion of civicdom now forced upon it. The gate opens upon the City, but the City Police have no power there. They will act only if called in by properly constituted authority, and specifically requested to assist in keeping the King's peace. The representative of law and order in the demesne is the beadle, who was originally appointed by Ely, and to-day is the servant of the Crown. The record of Ely Place is free from crime, as befits a community which has lived for long generations gone by under the ægis of a Cathedral. Often I have wondered what would have happened had one committed serious misdemeanour there. Would the beadle have seized the offender, handcuffed him, chained him to his watchbox, and sent messengers for

canon?—a Canon of Ely, of course. Or would the Bishop have come, gaitered and in shovel hat, running up breathlessly from the House of Lords? Or was this the Dean's work?

The beadle is also watchman, and in this capacity he keeps alive in this matter-of-fact, twentieth-century London one of its customs of generations gone by:

"Two o'clock, and a fine starlight night!"

You may hear the cry still, just as our ancestors did from the watchmen and "Charleys" who, with tottering footsteps and lantern burning, made their nocturnal perambulation of the streets, for the old London cries are not all stilled. The beadle of Ely Place beats the round of his pavements at appointed intervals during the night, proclaiming the hour and the state of the weather to those awake in their beds who may hear him. A good Father of St Etheldreda's, living at the priests' house, confided to me that he finds the cry rather disturbing. And he suspects that occasionally, in the drowsy hours, the watchman nods, or he himself sleeps soundly.

There is another reminder, of a thing centuries older, if you listen. At nine o'clock each night throughout the year you may hear from Ely Place, over the housetops, the musical clang of a bell, lasting some three or four minutes. That

is the bell of Gray's Inn ringing the London curfew, a practice which the Benchers of the Ancient and Honourable Society of that house religiously maintain. My good Father of St Etheldreda's, having heard it often, but little curious, asked me what it was! London has another curfew, rung each night at sunset from the Bell Tower of the Tower of London, as from ancient days. Yet I never knew a Londoner—or, like the Pinafore's captain, hardly ever—who could tell me whether the curfew was still observed.

But a few years back I was amused by a correspondence in *Notes and Queries* on this very topic of the curfew, when remote villages and hamlets were instanced where the Norman custom was still honoured by the ringing of a bell in the church tower. Nothing of this native place of mine. London is always big enough to be overlooked.

Long ago, for centuries till Queen Elizabeth had a "dancing Chancellor," Sir Christopher Hatton, Ely Place was part of the hostel and gardens of the Bishops of Ely. They resided there when in London, attending the King and Parliament. The prelate's church still stands—the Church of St Etheldreda in Ely Place, built in the late thirteenth century, which to-day is so well kept, and after use as a Welsh Episcopalian

chapel and misuse for lay purposes, has gone back to the Roman Catholic community. It is the only building commanding interest left, for the rest are offices by some uninspired architect, though no doubt admirably serving their purpose. The walled Ely Place spread far over what is now Hatton Garden, and its rose garden and orchard and meadows I imagine as especially fine; for when the desirability of Ely Place as a residence appealed to Sir Christopher's cupidity, it was a term of the lease granted by Ely that he should pay in rental "a red rose, ten loads of hay, and ten pounds per annum." If Shakespeare be an authority, then so far back as the reign of King Richard III. its unrivalled strawberries were another attraction of this fragrant spot—

"GLOUCESTER. My Lord of Ely,
When I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there:
I do beseech you send for some of them.
ELY. Marry, and will, my lord, with all my heart."

Hatton, the great Queen's favourite, had the lease for a limited term of ten years, but he was never got out while alive. When he was dead, and lay buried beneath an imposing monument in Old St Paul's, the bishop, protesting loudly, was still kept out of possession of his property. The Crown held fast, limpet-like, leaving to the

prelate's use only some dark rooms, and even of these the cellars beneath were partly occupied by others. The Commonwealth Parliament pulled down most of the buildings, and made a prison of the rest. Right through the time of the Stuarts, William and Mary, Anne, and of three of the four Georges the unedifying dispute as to the rights of possession was kept alive, till in the year 1772 a compromise was arranged, and the Bishop acquired possession of a town house in No. 37 Dover Street, Piccadilly. There, when so disposed, he lived, I fear uncomfortably, planted among the West End modistes and clubs, until in 1907 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners authorized Bishop Chase to sell the house and site for cash.

Ely Place is Crown property still, but its privilege, gained from the time when it was a Bishop's liberty, of flouting great London, rating itself and managing its own lighting, drainage, paving and all domestic affairs without interference by any outside body, has been taken away. Though geographically within the City, Ely Place forms no part of it. Nor is this the only corner about the City "out of bounds" of the Lord Mayor's jurisdiction.

If you chance to look into Wren's City churches any day between the hours of noon and three,

when substantially all of them are open for inspection and worship, you will find in some a great square, roomy pew, well placed near the pulpit, and at the head of the pew an elaborately wrought and decorated iron sword-rest. These are conspicuous in the churches of St Laurence Jewry, by Guildhall, Great St Helen's, Allhallows Barking, and many more. The rest rises high, so as to present to full view of the congregation that Sword which is the symbol of the Lord Mayor's authority, and is carried before him when he appears in full civic state.

It is a good Solingen blade, a serviceable weapon, well capable of drawing blood in torrents from any adversary upon whom it might descend, should there be such a one contemptuous enough to assail the majesty of the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of London in his own City, and in his presence. But of more interest, and in intrinsic value immeasurably greater, is the pearl scabbard that conceals the blade. This was a gift to her well-beloved City by Queen Elizabeth, and is the Corporation's most treasured relic. Sword and scabbard go before the Lord Mayor, as I have said, only on occasions of civic state.*

* A plainer State Sword has been in use since 1688, the Pearl Sword being reserved for the more important ceremonials.

I recall them here because so recently as the 1st of June, 1917, there was a memorial service held for the gallant scholars of the City of London School who had fallen in the Great War, and the place most appropriately chosen for it was the glorious church built by the Knights Templars, wherein cross-legged "Crusaders" lie in stone effigy.

The Lord Mayor on that occasion would not have been admitted to the Temple had he come in state. The Temple is extra-territorial. It has successfully resisted inclusion under the Union of Parishes Act; it still assesses its own rates; in the year 1911 it kept outside its gates the City Coroner when he attempted to hold a fire inquest there. Holy Church and England's Kings made the Temple independent in the long ages back, and, jealous of its privileges, it has never admitted the jurisdiction of the Lord Mayor within its boundaries. It pays him neither allegiance nor honour. I am confident that everything was done with the utmost courtesy, but there was the Templars' *non possumus*, and it was a most modest little procession of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs that passed through the quiet courts of the Temple to the church, the civic dignitaries robed, certainly, and attended, but without Sword and scabbard, Mace or any

emblem that might proclaim authority that the Temple denies.*

The contest has not always been so well conducted.

A Lord Mayor once ventured to intrude into the Temple; with painful results. That was two and a half centuries ago, and the Temple then, as to-day, held itself free, when so ill-mannered, to tilt its nose and snap its fingers at Mayor or Aldermen. Sir William Turner, a right worthy Lord Mayor, to whose enterprise London, rebuilding after the Great Fire, owed a large debt, filled the civic chair in 1668-9. Invited to dine in hall by Mr Goodfellow, the Reader of Inner Temple, on the 3rd March, he communicated his intention to come in state, bearing his symbols of office. The whole Society protested. Whereupon the Lord Mayor declined to come at all; but, evidently piqued, he afterwards sent this message: "I will come and dine with him; I will bear up my Sword, and see who dares to take it down."

Defiance of this kind the Templars did not lightly suffer upon their own ground. A mob of barristers and students of the Inn, wearing rapiers under their cloaks, confronted the civic party as they passed into the Temple Cloisters.

* See *The City Press* of June 2, 1917.

One Hodges, their spokesman, told the Mayor that unless his Sword-bearer at once lowered the civic Sword they would not be permitted to enter the hall. It was not the King's, but was the Lord Mayor's Sword; "they were as good men as he, and no respect should be paid to him there."

No answer being made to a demand couched in these insolent terms, there was an immediate rush for the mayoral Sword. It was pulled down, but not captured, and in the struggle the Sword-bearer was slightly hurt, and some of the pearls from the scabbard were knocked off. The Cap of Maintenance borne by an official was partly snatched from him. Worse still fared the City Marshal's men in attendance. They were seized by the law students and hustled away to be put under the pump, but as the record quaintly says, "were not pumped." Their staffs were taken from them, and they were beaten and maltreated with their own weapons.

Driven into a corner, the Lord Mayor, with his retinue, took shelter in the chambers of Mr Auditor Phillips. Sir John Nicholas, the Recorder, with the Sheriffs, was despatched to Whitehall to report the affront to King Charles II. Sir Richard Browne caused the drums to beat for the Trained Bands to assemble. Here were all the

elements of a first-class riot: the Lord Mayor roughly imprisoned; the Templars in their most warlike mood; and an appeal to the Crown.

The wise Sovereign appears to have advised the Lord Mayor to go back to the City.

As soon as the Recorder and Sheriffs had returned, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen attempted to make their way out of the Temple. They were again opposed by the victorious students, with Hodges at their head, and a scene of wild excitement and confusion followed. Blows were showered upon the Aldermen, and one of the Sheriffs was seized by the collar in the frantic attempts by the students to pull down the civic Sword. The Lord Mayor and Aldermen were called "cuckolds," and their officers "dogs, rogues, rascals, and other very bad names." Black eyes were dealt out to the servants. The students refused to allow the Lord Mayor to depart bearing his Sword up except by way of Ram Alley (to-day Hare Place), a court of infamous reputation that was regarded as a back door of the Inn.

No other course offered but for the Lord Mayor and his party again to take refuge in the Auditor's chambers. The Sheriffs and Sir John Nicholas were sent off a second time to the King. The Benchers then intervened with effect, and it

was intimated to his lordship that he might leave without further interruption ("the young gentlemen," says Pepys, had been persuaded to go in to dinner). Finally the Lord Mayor and his train, empty without having dined, made a safe exit, though accompanied to the Temple Gate by members and students of the Inn, shouting and jeering at the civic party.

It is written in the Guildhall records "that the proceedings aforesaid were greatly affrontive and dishonourable to the Government of the City"—which none will dispute.

Ten years later a Lord Mayor, accompanied by civic officials, put in an appearance at the Temple on occasion of a destructive fire. Again the courts resounded with shouts of protest at his presence from noisy Templars. They knew no Lord Mayor there. His lordship was well advised to beat a hasty retreat. He had a mean revenge. Outside he met a City fire-engine of the time hurrying along to assist in putting out the flames. He turned it back!

. . . . .

Do you know of a case in the City where a man has to pay a guinea a year for the right of entering his own front door?

My excellent friend the Rev A. Taylor, vicar of St Bride's, who knows printing as intimately

as he knows divinity, and thus came well equipped for a Fleet Street cure, told me of such a one. He is himself the victim. The circumstance arises curiously. The vicar, of course, occupies the parsonage house, and that of St Bride's is elbowed away at the north end of Bridewell Place, between the St Bride Foundation Institute on the one side and what was a police station on the other, but to-day—so things change in this changing world—is the office at which *The Sportsman* daily newspaper is produced.

Wolsey once occupied the St Bride's parsonage, in Bridewell's great days, and Sir Richard Empson, King Henry VII.'s rapacious tax-collector, before him—the last beheaded on Tower Hill. I wonder if my vicar friend is troubled by ghosts?

All ground hereabouts is historical. The large Palace of Bridewell of King Henry VIII. and Catherine of Aragon, their desolate residence while they awaited the divorce trial—the Court assembled in the old Blackfriars Priory, close at hand—stretched from before the parson's front door down to the riverside. Its battlemented walls, with the Tudor diaper pattern in black brick embedded in the red brick, as you see to-day at Hampton Court, rose 36 feet in height, and the turrets yet higher. The northern

wall ran here, built of a thickness enough to cover part of what is now the pavement upon which pedestrians tread and the width of 2 feet 3 inches behind the parson's iron railing. The pavement and road have been dedicated to the public, the private 27 inches strip has not. Bridewell Royal Hospital, the charitable foundation of Edward VI., keeps its old plans and is properly jealous—being a charitable body—of its old rights, and it has not forgotten that the Palace wall ended inside the parson's rail, and what land that wall covered is its own land.

St Bride's Parsonage has no back entrance. There is no way of getting into the house but by the front door, and to reach it the vicar has to step over that narrow strip of ground whereon the wall rose. Bridewell Hospital mulcts him in one guinea each year for the privilege of so doing, and he takes a receipt.

In Tudor Street there is another curious reminder of the previous existence of the Royal Palace of Bridewell. Nos. 3 and 5 are adjacent and distinct houses, with a party wall between them, which exactly marks the site of the western exterior wall of the Palace But go into No. 3, and you find a semi-octagonal staircase well, from basement to roof, cut out of the next house, commodious enough for a lift and a wide flight of stairs.

A turret of Bridewell Palace stood upon that ground, projecting beyond the wall. It was, and is, Bridewell Hospital's property. Up this turret, maybe, where now is a modern staircase, occupying just as much ground, Henry VIII. and Queen Catherine passed, the sly diplomatist Noailles, and the Ambassadors, Jean de Dinteville and George de Selve, who were occupants of Bridewell, and whose portraits you may see in Holbein's picture of "The Ambassadors" at the National Gallery.

The Rev E. G. O'Donoghue, the gifted historian of Bridewell, gave me this explanation. Many a monastic foundation about the City no doubt has left like oddities upon its ground site, lasting over the centuries.

. . . . .

Charles Dickens, of course, knew Fleet Street. He was the first editor of the *Daily News*, and abandoned the struggling infant after seventeen days of life. "Make a vow (as I have done),"—so he wrote to Forster, his friend and biographer, who with a heavy heart dropped into the editorial chair—"never to go down that court with the little news shop at the corner any more, and let us swear by Jack Straw as in ancient times. I am beginning to get over my sorrow for your nights up aloft in Whitefriars, and to feel nothing

but happiness in the contemplation of your enfranchisement."

The court alluded to was Pleydell Court, with its little corner shop in Fleet Street then kept as a tobacconist's by Mrs Burton, a former actress, who exposed the *Daily News* for sale, and to-day showing Geographia's skilful maps.

Not thirty paces farther down Fleet Street's falling ground is Bouverie Street, and a door from its corner is a railway receiving office, and at its side the fragment of an old coaching inn's yard. Over the house front you still may read the name, "The Bolt-in-Tun."* A famous coaching inn was the Bolt-in-Tun in Fleet Street, whence set out the coaches for Cambridge, Winchester, Lincoln, and incidentally a good many other places, when people travelled that fashion because there was none better, and, indeed, continued to travel after the iron horse had driven the stages one after another off the road. For it was the distinction of the Bolt-in-Tun that it was the last to give up the fight. It ran the very last stage coach out of London on a regular route served by railway, and that was in the Victorian forties.

What, I fancy a puzzled inquirer asking, has

* As I pass this page in final proof at Easter, 1921, housebreakers are demolishing the building.

Charles Dickens to do with all this? Well, just this. Dickens knew London like a book; he walked about with eyes always observant, and it was from painted names above the shop-fronts, on passing vehicles and in advertisements, that he derived not a few of those names made famous as characters in fiction. No man ever had, or has, copyright in his own name, though his signature is his inalienable birthright.

Dickens, of course, knew every stone of Fleet Street, wherein he wrote and printed and published, and he came—that was after the time with which I am concerned—to fill, though for so short a span, the editor's chair. At the corner of Fetter Lane is Peele's old coffee-house, and people I have met remember Dickens looking over the newspaper files there, which used to be that house's speciality. He knew the Bolt-in-Tun in the days when its coaching traffic, outlasting its usefulness but struggling gallantly, was dwindling away, and he saw a poster exhibited in its windows.

I have a churchwarden friend, Mr Robert Gray, whom you may meet any Sunday morning at St Clement, Eastcheap. Now he trades in wine alone in the City, and treasures his family association with this last of the old coaching inns in London to run a stage coach. He has the clock by which the guard of the coach kept time and

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COACHING POSTER OF 1838

faith with his passengers, a big watch cased for safety in wood and still in running order, a model of the coach, and other relics. But the piece I envy him most is a bill exhibited in the Bolt-in-Tun window, where Dickens, so often passing by, cannot have failed to see it, and he has allowed me to reproduce it.

Notice the signatures. Now you may make a shrewd guess where Dickens looked for the name of his immortal Mr Pickwick.

This particular poster I have photographed bears a date two years after *The Pickwick Papers* began to appear in monthly parts.

. . . . .

A City Company I know, with unostentatious hand doing good deeds in charity and education, keeps alive a custom which I trust may never die. It is a distant recollection, dining in its stately hall, but at some stage of the feast there comes round the tables a steward, with an attendant waiter bearing a tray of tiny glasses filled with an amber or a white fluid, and to each guest in turn is put the question—

"Do you dine, Sir, with Alderman or with Lady Cooper?"

If "With the Alderman" be the reply, a liqueur of rich cognac is placed at your hand. Should

you choose Lady Cooper as host of the occasion, then the glass is one of pure Hollands. That Hollands, so competent judges have assured me, is a brew of rare delight, itself justifying a claim by the Dutch to be considered a Great Power.

Dead they have been these two hundred years and more, the Alderman and his lady, these hosts at the Clothworkers' feasts—for that is the Company—but whenever the liverymen assemble to dine and wine their memories are revived. It was an earlier Clothworkers' Hall that Pepys in the Great Fire of London saw burning for three days and nights in one body of flame, the cellars being full of oil—a vivid incident in that vast catastrophe. Alderman Cooper was, I take it, a fellow of good cheer, holding his own with all honest drinkers of his day, knowing men in their strength and weakness. He died, and dying left to his Company a sum of money to provide the good French brandy, that always when his brothers met and dined they should drink a glass in remembrance. His relict, knowing that by this means her worthy spouse's memory was kept green, at her own death-bed made a like provision.

Some men achieve immortality by greatness in battle, in statesmanship, in the arts.

If not great, concede that Alderman Cooper

was worldly wise. It is not in the cold aisle of some cathedral, or weathered mausoleum, or by unheeded monument in the market place, that his memory is kept. It survives at the festive board, a living thing. It comes fragrant over the centuries, ever being renewed, warming the company, bespeaking their gratitude.

Men there are accounted great in their day who will rest in oblivion and their names be forgotten while still at many feasts to come, so long as the Clothworkers' Company endures, the question will be asked of the guests—

"Do you dine, Sir, with Alderman or with Lady Cooper?"

. . . . . .

But I am finishing in anecdotage.

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